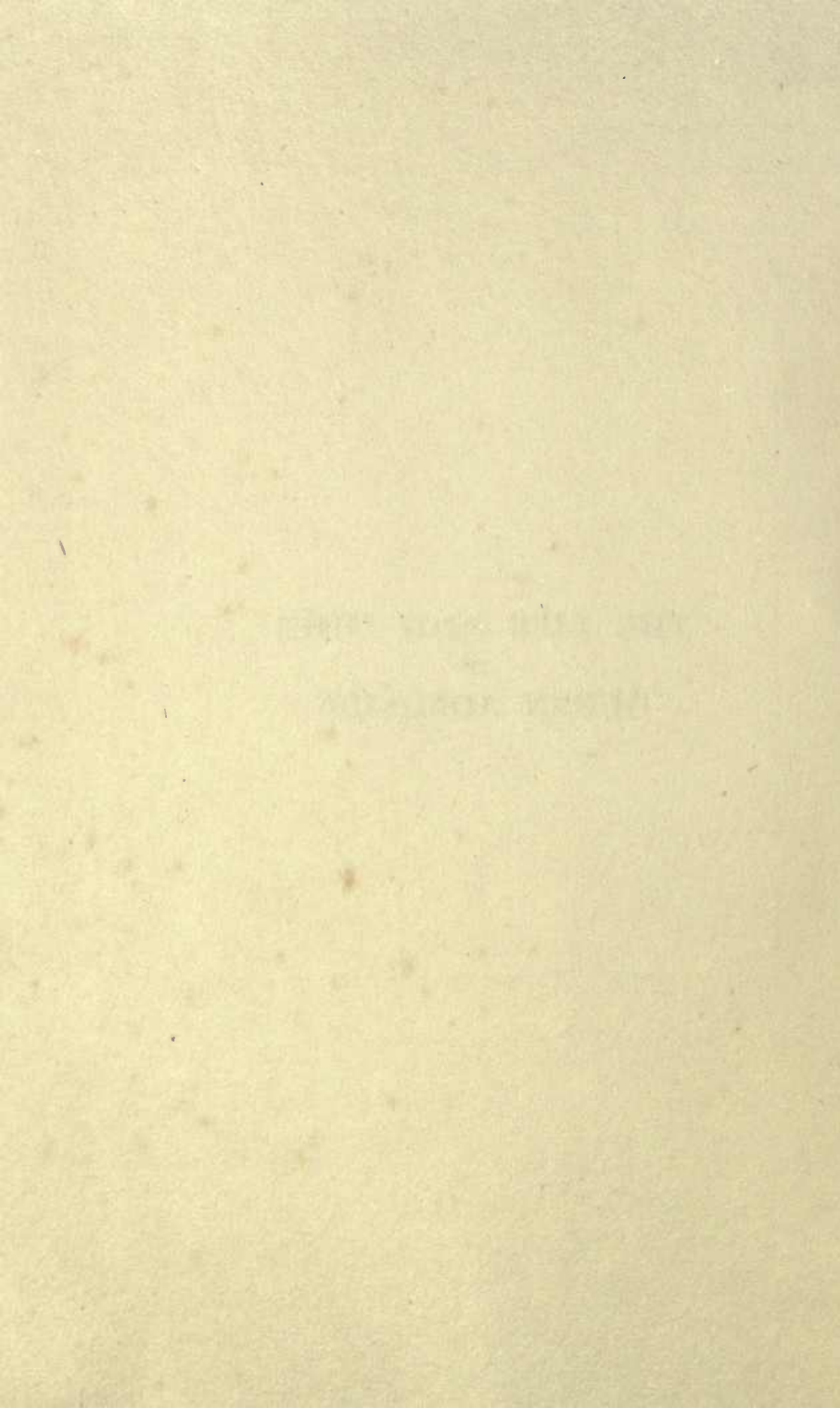


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**THE LIFE AND TIMES
OF
QUEEN ADELAIDE**





Queen Adelaide

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF QUEEN ADELAIDE

BY

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"HONORÉ DE BALZAC," "LAUZUN, COURTIER AND ADVENTURER,"
"LOUIS XVIII," "PRINCESS AND QUEEN," "LIFE OF MARY II"

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PREFACE

THIS book, like all other undertakings, has suffered from the Great Upset, as it has been called, of the War.

By the kind permission of the authorities of Saxe-Meiningen, photographs of portraits of Queen Adelaide's parents, and of herself as child, young lady, and bride, were to have graced these pages. However, the war broke out just as, preliminaries having been arranged, the Court photographer was about to execute his task in the Castle of Saxe-Meiningen, and very naturally I have never received the photographs.

I must take this opportunity to express my warm gratitude to Prince Radolin for his kind offices with various German officials, and must specially thank the Minister at Meiningen and the officials at the Archive Office there for the trouble they have taken, and the facilities they have accorded me for studying the early life of Queen Adelaide.

▼

I must also acknowledge my indebtedness to Miss FitzClarence, to the Earl of Munster, and to Lord De L'Isle and Dudley for allowing portraits in their possession to be photographed for reproduction in this book.

MARY F. SANDARS .

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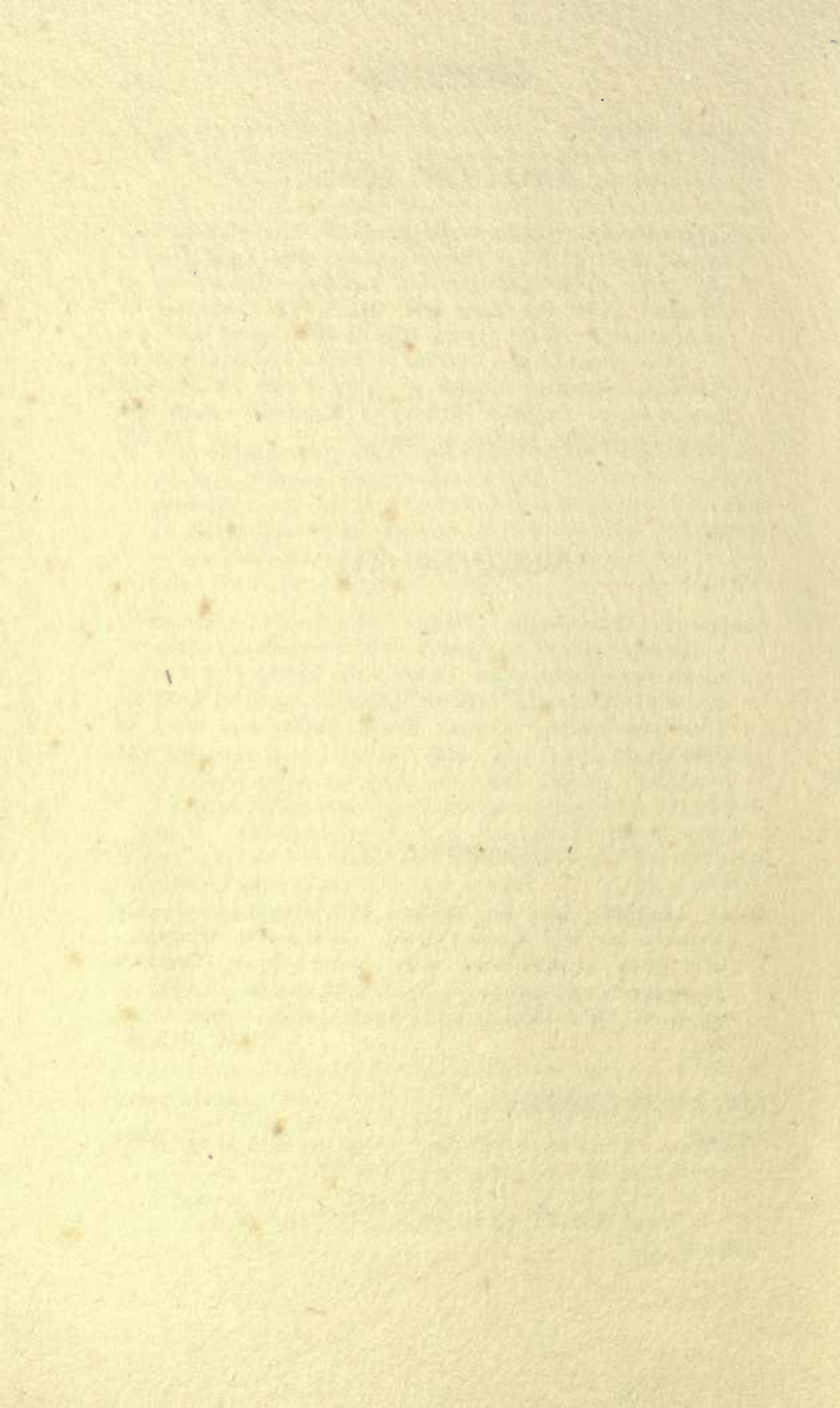
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QUEEN ADELAIDE

CHAPTER I

Queen Adelaide's unhappiness and want of understanding of England—Her influence over William IV—The difficulties of her married life—Her kindness to the FitzClarences—Strict morality, generosity, and freedom from religious prejudice

A DISTINGUISHED English artist who painted the portrait of Queen Adelaide used to say that one day, noticing the redness of her eyes, he thought that he had placed her in a light which tried them, and suggested that she should alter her position.

“It is not that,” answered the Queen in her broken English; “it is that I have veept much.”

Certainly if to find oneself the mark of hatred, scorn, calumny, and lying tongues be cause for tears, during the seven years when Queen Adelaide occupied the position of Queen Consort of England she had ample reason for shedding them.

Kindly, amiable, and charitable, no English Queen Consort has ever raised against herself so violent a storm of indignation as did Queen Adelaide. Hers was the crime of setting herself

against the strongest English movement of modern times, of trying vainly to stem the torrent which, though failing in its apparent object of giving political representation to the masses, accomplished the great work of transferring power from the aristocracy to the middle classes, and of giving a shattering blow to the prestige of the House of Lords.

Queen Adelaide was not a clever woman. She lacked that rare possession, a mind capable of detaching itself from early prepossessions and prejudices; and she came from a small State which was happy and prosperous under the paternally absolute government which Metternich's all-permeating influence had helped to perpetuate in the German principalities. Why could not England be happy and prosperous under a somewhat similar rule? In Saxe-Meiningen, at any rate, the yoke of government was not oppressive. The reigning family were greeted with jubilation whenever they appeared in public. Their marriages were days of popular rejoicing; they divided the Thuringian forests to provide the peasants with firing during the winter; they built and endowed schools for the poor; the courtyard of their residence served as a lounge for their subjects, who stared unchecked into their windows.

In Meiningen joyful crowds came out to greet Queen Adelaide as she passed; in England,

when she was credited with being the principal obstacle to the passing of the Reform Bill, she was hooted and pelted, and she fancied herself at the stormy dawn of a second French Revolution which should sweep the monarchy of England from the throne. How could she think otherwise? The horrors of the Great Revolution of 1789 were fresh in the minds of everyone; and though at the time of the agitation about the Reform Bill the French Revolution of 1830 had shown that political upheavals could be consummated without bloodshed, it had also proved how easily a change of dynasty might be effected. Queen Adelaide very naturally shrank with horror from any idea of democratic encroachment, and, like many people cleverer than herself, she never understood that the only way to stop a revolution in England which might sweep the Sovereign from his throne was to grant what the people required. She could not comprehend the blend of intense conservatism with reforming energy which makes England unique among nations, because, while carrying out sweeping and far-reaching alterations in her Constitution, she glides over a smooth surface of precedent, of ancient forms and ceremonies, on which she makes her way, and so passes over perilous places without violent shock or disruption.

It has been said that the obloquy heaped on the Queen for her interference in State affairs

was wholly unmerited, and that she was a quiet, domestic woman, not interested in political matters. This is, I think, to a great extent untrue. Politics to a woman in Queen Adelaide's position, and in the crisis at which she found herself, were not an abstract subject, of which a certain knowledge is creditable; they were the most important matter in life. Would she and William IV remain King and Queen of England? would they be forced to take refuge in Hanover? or—for this contingency loomed large before her eyes—would the scaffold be their ultimate destiny? For, strange as it seems, Queen Adelaide believed firmly that if the dignified aristocratic Whigs had their way, Marie Antoinette's fate would be her own! Stranger still, if she ever read the account of the speeches at Radical meetings, she had some warrant for her belief. Terrible threats were used against her, and she was compared to Henrietta Maria, the Queen who was looked on as her husband's evil genius. Therefore the *Times's* constant admonitions to her that a Queen Consort—a foreigner—had no right to meddle in politics, seem a trifle unreasonable.

Much that Queen Adelaide's enemies said of her interference in politics was of course untrue; she was credited with far more power and with much greater activity than she exercised. She was credited, too, with malign intentions, whereas Queen Adelaide was the most amiable and

benevolent of women. It was, however, true that while she, like many other good and conscientious individuals, would give much in charity, she shrank back in horror and alarm when anything was claimed by the people as a right. Nevertheless, she was no intriguer, and her influence was only exercised over her husband—a sphere of action which has always been considered legitimate for women.

Only on one occasion do we hear of any attempt on her part to communicate with any party leader, and that was when by the action of Lord Grey, the Whig Prime Minister, she had been deprived of her Chamberlain, Lord Howe. Then she applied, through Lord Howe, to the Duke of Wellington for counsel, and the Duke, while giving the requested advice, with much good judgment refused to hold communication directly with her.

It was, however, in her relations to the King that Queen Adelaide was able to exert influence over the destiny of the country. Though he must eventually have yielded to the determination of his people, or must have retired to Hanover, much depended on the King's will. It was, in fact, his action in refusing to create sufficient peers to form a Whig majority in the House of Lords, which brought the country to the verge of revolution. Lord Grey, indeed, said at one time that no politics were talked in the Royal Household; but later he altered his

opinion, and realised that Tory influences were strong, if exercised beneath the surface.

“There is the Queen to be reckoned with,” wrote the astute Princess Lieven, referring to a political question. The Queen’s views were indeed expressed so openly, that she did not hesitate to remind a guest dining at Windsor that it was the anniversary of a glorious event in which he had assisted—this glorious event being the rejection of the Reform Bill by the House of Lords. Queen Adelaide was not alone in her views; the whole of the Royal Family, except the Whig Duke of Sussex, dreaded and feared the passing of the Reform Bill. The detested Duke of Cumberland was the ostensible head of the party which opposed it, while the Earl of Munster and Lady de L’Isle and Dudley, the King’s eldest and favourite son and daughter, were strong Tories.

William IV was remarkably impressionable, and the influence exercised over him by his wife had always been very strong. The most casual observers were struck with the change in him after a few years of married life. His rough, boorish manners had disappeared, and, except during the fits of excitement to which he was liable, he was quiet, well behaved, and like an ordinary person. Even during these fits of excitement, Queen Adelaide had great power of soothing and calming him. In one of them, caused by the excitement of becoming heir-

apparent to the throne of England, his mental balance was completely upset, and he appears to have become for a time actually insane, to the delight of the Duke of Cumberland, the next heir, who declared publicly that his brother was a lunatic like his father.

Each crisis in William's life seemed indeed to upset his mental equilibrium for a time. On his first elevation to the throne his extraordinary utterances made everyone declare him to be mad; and later, under the stress and worry of the struggle about the Reform Bill, his condition again caused much anxiety. It is interesting to speculate whether if William had married a wife less admirable than Queen Adelaide, whose gentleness and calm reasonableness were of the greatest moral support to him, he would ever have been in a fit condition to ascend the throne, or whether the detested and reactionary Duke of Cumberland would have followed George IV, in which case the days of the Monarchy in England were likely to have been numbered. Perhaps therefore Queen Adelaide may have been the means of preserving the hereditary Monarchy in England, though at one time she seemed to count among the forces ranged against it.

There is no doubt that Queen Adelaide had been married against her will, and that much in her surroundings when she first came to England did violence not only to her feelings,

but also to the moral sense which was her strongest attribute. The morals of the English Royal Family were a scandal to Europe. Those of the Regent were so notorious that before the Duc d'Angoulême paid a visit to England, anxious consultations were held between Louis XVIII and his Ministers as to the amount of intercourse it would be wise, in view of the Republican conscience, to allow him to hold with the discredited heir to the English throne. The record of the execrable Duke of Cumberland was shameful; and the lawsuit in which Queen Charlotte's favourite son, the Duke of York, was implicated, had dragged his reputation through the mire. Though the Duke of Clarence's life had probably been better than the lives of his brothers, his relations with Mrs. Jordan—an actress of light morals who had had several children by different men before his connection with her—must have filled the strictly nurtured Princess of Meiningen with horror.

Queen Adelaide was constantly reminded of her husband's connection with Mrs. Jordan by the existence of the FitzClarences, who surrounded their father, claiming his affection and, especially after his accession, demanding solid proofs of it in the shape of titles, appointments, money, and advancement. When these were not granted, their complaints to Ministers and to William himself were bitter and continuous. Their pretensions are not surprising, for they

had in their childhood been treated almost as though they had been the Duke's legitimate offspring. When William became King, this had its inconveniences, as favours granted to them were viewed by the English people with bitter suspicion, and sneers were levelled at his bastards, whose existence involved him in considerable unpopularity. There was a certain poetic justice in the fact that William should be plagued by the consequences of his own folly, but it seemed hard that Queen Adelaide should also suffer, as she undoubtedly did.

The worry of dealing with a large family essentially in a false position, who often treated her with scant respect, must have been physically deleterious to one with the delicate health of Queen Adelaide. She had also continually before her eyes the fear that her husband, for whom she came in time to entertain sincere affection, would suffer in the world's estimation by the existence of his illegitimate children. That this idea weighed heavily on her mind is shown by the fact that when, after William IV's death, Queen Victoria offered her whatever she chose to take from Windsor Castle, she selected a small picture of the FitzClarence family with a bust of their father in the centre, saying that this was an aspect of him which had better not be exposed to the public view.

Therefore, extraordinary credit must be ac-

corded to the Duchess of Clarence for her behaviour to the FitzClarences, who were, some of them, children at the time of her marriage to their father. Queen Charlotte is said to have disapproved of her extreme kindness to them, and the whole Royal Family were astonished at it.

Lady Munster, one of William IV's grandchildren, who married her cousin, the second Earl of Munster, writes thus of Queen Adelaide¹: "I feel more than rejoiced to be enabled now to give my affectionate and respectful testimony to the gracious and Christianlike love and tenderness ever offered to the poor actress's children by the Duchess of Clarence, afterwards Queen Adelaide, who, to the day of her death, treated the numerous FitzClarence family as only a loving and gentle woman could. I remember Queen Adelaide and her kind acts well, and know what it must have cost her tender heart at times to see this beautiful family around her (her husband's but not her own), and yet she ever loved them, and helped them with a mother's tenderness."

The situation was, as Lady Munster remarks, "an awkward, I might have said, a painful position, for all parties," and there is no doubt that Queen Adelaide felt it deeply, all the more because she had no child of her own on which to lavish the intense mother love which filled her heart.

¹ *My Memories*, Countess of Munster, p. 4.

The great trouble of Queen Adelaide's life was doubtless the loss of little Elizabeth, the only child born to her who had sufficient strength to live for a few months. If this child had not died, her position with her husband's children, with the Royal Family, and with the whole nation, would have been very different from what it was. Married to a man in bad health, thirty years older than herself, she would have been considered as likely to be Regent during a long minority, and would have received a deference and respect not accorded to one who might, owing to the King's precarious health, at any moment become powerless either for good or for evil.

This, however, was not what afflicted Queen Adelaide's heart; her bitter regret was for the loss of her baby, the one creature who would have been her own in a strange land where she never found her way rightly, the little daughter who lived long enough for her mother to realise the joy of possessing a child and the desolation of losing one. It is pathetic to see that in the will she drew up in 1849, she left to Queen Victoria what was evidently her most precious possession, the bust of Princess Elizabeth; and that she begged to have this placed in the corridor of Windsor Castle.

Possibly a little pride mingled with the request. This was not an object to be removed from the walls, to be ashamed of, like the bust of William

surrounded by the FitzClarence family; this was his legitimate daughter, hers too, who, had she lived, would have been Queen of England.

It is probable, however, that Queen Adelaide was too gentle and unworldly to follow this line of thought, and only wished that her child should not be forgotten.

Queen Adelaide claims our respect for the stand she made to uphold morality. In our gratitude to Queen Victoria for the purity of her Court, we must not forget that her two immediate predecessors, though not invested with her powers and grievously handicapped by the doings of their mankind, had insisted that only virtuous women should be admitted to society. That hard, brave, much-beset little lady, Queen Charlotte, may have helped, by her selfish inaction and want of interest in her children, to bring about the scandals which disgraced her family. She doubtless, however, had no idea that she was not in all respects an admirable mother, and as regards her Court, she was a model of virtue. The gentler, more truly Christian Queen Adelaide, while turning away from sin, did her best to spare the feelings of the sinner. Her position, surrounded by her husband's illegitimate children, was anomalous, and caused occasional strictures to be made on her exclusiveness, but she was determined that the women at least of her Court should be above reproach.

Queen Adelaide had never wished to be Queen, and when William IV died she retired into private life, and very little was heard of her. Her health, which had always been delicate, declined gradually, and the last few years of her life she was completely invalided.

Hers was not, however, a useless life. Great was her generosity; indeed she is said to have spent half her income in charity. This princely munificence, if such grandiloquent language can be used about the gentle Queen's unostentatious benevolence, was bounded by no questions of creed or even of nationality. Bountiful help to the charities of the parish in which Marlborough House, her town residence during her widowhood, was situated; contributions to different missionary societies; a new road in Madeira, where she spent the winter for her health, to help the Portuguese fishermen to dispose of their merchandise; and a church for the English inhabitants of Malta—such were some of her charities. She was extraordinarily free from prejudice and unbound by dogma. Possibly the fact that in her private life she was brought into close contact with the results of terribly low and base morality made the gulf which yawned between good and evil so wide that all other differences were of minor importance.

As the Rev. Frederick Robertson said when he preached Queen Adelaide's funeral sermon at Brighton, "No peculiar religious party mourns

its patroness. Of all our jarring religious sects in the Church, and out of it, not one dares to claim her as its own. Her spirit soared above these things. It is known that she hardly recognised them. All was lost in the name of Christian."

CHAPTER II

Princess Adelaide's parentage and birth, baptism—Birth of her sister and brother—Her education—Education in the town of Meiningen—A paternal government—Death of Princess Adelaide's father—Her confirmation—The Napoleonic Wars—Harsh regulations—A time of stress—The Peace of Tilsit—Arrival of the Emperor Alexander in Meiningen—Entry of the Allies into Paris—Marriage of the Princess Ida—Princess Adelaide's betrothal to the Duke of Clarence—She and her mother start for England

ON August 13th, 1792, great festivities took place in the town of Meiningen, for, after ten years of barren wedlock, a child, the future Queen Adelaide, was born to the reigning Duke. The delight would have been even more intense had the Duke of Saxe-Meiningen's first-born been a son ; but the birth of the child was an earnest of possible male heirs in the future. Besides, no statute was then in existence forbidding a woman to reign over Saxe-Meiningen. The law of primogeniture was not introduced till the year 1800, when a son was born to Princess Adelaide's parents, and the succession was then fixed in the eldest male heir.

The little duchy of Saxe-Meiningen is situated just to the north of Bavaria and of Coburg. It is a mountainous and thickly wooded district, covered by the Thuringer-Wald, while the

Rhine Mountains rise in the south-western portion of the province. Owing to failure of the male line, Meiningen fell, in the year 1583, into the hands of the Saxon Princes, and in the year 1680, Bernard, who is always considered the founder of his house, and who was the third son of the reigning Saxon Duke, came to the throne. When Bernard died in 1706, his brother, together with his three sons, ruled over Meiningen in common, an arrangement which must have proved a great strain of temper to the four Dukes, perhaps also to their subjects.

However, in 1746 only one of the joint Sovereigns, Anthony Ulrich, was left, and he reigned alone till 1763. To the intense disgust of the aristocracy of his kingdom, he married a Mme. Scharmann, who was not of noble birth. Therefore his children were not allowed to inherit the throne, and at his death two young kinsmen, Charles and George, sons of the late Duke of Gotha, governed the dukedom jointly. In 1803 Charles died, and George, the Princess Adelaide's father, became sole Sovereign.

Duke George was born in 1761, and was a wise and beneficent prince. Under his rule the resources of the little kingdom, which were mainly manufacturing in the north and agricultural in the south, were greatly developed. He was much beloved by his subjects, with whom he mixed freely, even condescending to visit with the burgher families and to drink ale with

the peasants at rustic gatherings. On July 21st, 1782, the year of his accession, he married Princess Louise Eleanor of Hohenlohe, and, after long-deferred hope, the subject of this biography came into the world.

Princess Adelaide was the first princess who had been born in the old castle of Meiningen for eighty years, and there was genuine joy when at eleven o'clock at night the news of her arrival in the world was announced to the inhabitants of Meiningen by the firing of cannon and the ringing of church bells. The next day much music in the form of songs of praise and thanksgiving was heard throughout the town, and the poor were feasted and given money.

Sunday, August 19th, was kept as a day of solemn thanksgiving throughout the land, and at five o'clock in the afternoon the infant Princess was baptised in the little Castle chapel, by the names of Amalie Adelheid Luise Therese Caroline. The list of her godparents is even more imposing than that of her names, for she had twenty-one. Nineteen of these were godmothers, the reigning Prince of Hohenlohe-Langenburg and the Landgraf of Hesse-Barchfeld being her only godfathers. Among her godmothers her mother, several of her mother's relations, as well as the Queen of the Romans, the Queen of Naples, the Crown Princess of Saxony, and the Duchesses of Gotha, Coburg, and Weimar may be mentioned.

The hymns chosen to be sung at her christening were "Nun danket all Gott," and "Nun danket All' and bringet Ehr." Other more mundane festivities took place the same day. In the evening of the christening, the town was illuminated to celebrate the event, and a dinner-party was given in the Castle.

The festivities in connection with the happy event were not even then over, for when the Duchess of Saxe-Meiningen was churched, on September 23rd, a temple was erected in the market-place. In this the principal people of the town were entertained with music, and in the evening there was a second illumination of the town.

Two years later, at the christening of a second daughter, who was named Ida, the festivities were even more paternally democratic, if the expression be allowable. On this occasion there were about 200 sponsors, and while some of these were of princely rank, others were chosen from among the Duke's servants, and twenty-two were girls taken by lot from the different villages, and lodged and feasted at Duke George's expense.

The christening was on this occasion public, a temple decorated with flowers being erected on either side of the great gate leading into the Castle courtyard, which was thronged with spectators. One of these temples was intended for the princely sponsors and the other for those of humble birth, for even on this democratic

occasion it was deemed necessary to make *some* distinction between the different ranks of society. At six o'clock in the evening the 200 sponsors assembled round a font which had been erected on the balcony of one of the temples, and amid the acclamations of the crowd below, the infant was given the name of Ida.

A still-born daughter followed in 1796, and the joy was all the greater when, on December 17th, 1800, a Crown Prince came into the world. He was christened Bernhard Erich Freund, and his father's impartiality is shown by the fact—which is carefully recorded as of importance—that representatives of the Lutheran, Reformed, and Catholic Churches were among his god-parents.

Before the arrival of their brother into the world, the two Princesses had begun their education in good earnest. In the year 1797, when Adelaide was five and Ida three years old, their tuition was entrusted to Friedrich Schenk, afterwards counsellor and Court librarian. By him they were taught French and Italian, a native accent not being apparently considered necessary for the teacher of a language. At first Friedrich Schenk held the position of tutor alone, but for a year, when the Princess Adelaide had attained the age of nine, Hofrats Schmidt Buckeburg shared the responsibility with him.

Duke George watched over the education of his daughters with the greatest interest, and

himself drew up a programme for their work intended not only to improve their memory, but to instil religious and moral feelings, and to develop their understanding. Their theological education was entrusted to Herr Emmrich, chief Chaplain-in-ordinary to Duke George, history and German style being also his province, "which he looked after with the greatest knowledge and conscientiousness. Till the last year of his life, he enjoyed the highest esteem of these two noble pious daughters of our admirable princely house, and was often given striking proofs of this," says his biographer.

Certainly if the Princess's education did not make her an intellectual woman, it succeeded as far as her moral qualities were concerned, for Good Queen Adelaide is not the misnomer that many Royal nicknames have been.

Possibly the arrangement of having two tutors did not work well; at any rate, at the end of the year 1800 the Princesses were given a new chamberlain and tutor in the person of Friedrich Schmidt, formerly major-domo at Lippe-Buckeburg, to whom the instruction of the Crown Prince was also entrusted.

Education was not lightly thought of in the State of Meiningen. Many are the references to it in the town chronicle, and it was evidently in a far more advanced condition than education in England at the same period. There were industrial schools in Meiningen where orphans

and destitute children were taught trades, part of the money they earned by their work being used in providing them with clothing. There was also a school which was open on Sundays where children were instructed in writing, arithmetic, and drawing. The young in Meiningen were certainly not allowed to be idle, for in their playtime they were given work, for which they received wages, in the English garden, which was a great feature of the town.

The great event in education, however, of which the town was evidently extremely proud, was the founding of a girls' school. This was started in the year 1797, and references to it abound in the Meiningen chronicles. The girls were taught by men, and the system of education was apparently very advanced, Latin being included in the curriculum. To a chance reader the salient point, however, about the school is the extraordinary mortality among the teachers. Every few months there is an entry to the effect that one of the teachers has died, and we must conclude either that the girls' school was a last home for worn-out teachers, an arrangement which we are sure the conscientious Duke George would not have sanctioned, or that teaching the girls of Meiningen was a peculiarly strenuous occupation. The school cannot have been unhealthy, as no special mortality is recorded among the scholars.

Meiningen was a very active little State, and

the keen eyes of the Duke were constantly supervising the small details of the government of his dukedom. When the bitterly cold winter of 1799 caused much distress among the poor, the inhabitants of Meiningen were allowed for four weeks to get wood for themselves out of the forest in the neighbourhood, but they were not permitted to take green wood. Later, as this permission was evidently abused, one member of each family was allowed to go in quest of wood once a week, and was not allowed to take an axe with him. A paternal government watched over everything. The inhabitants of Meiningen were inclined, like many other people, to spend much money on their funerals, and orders were given forbidding them to use oak coffins, or to entertain the mourners with sumptuous repasts. Begging was prohibited, shoemakers were only allowed to use materials of home manufacture, dancing on Sundays was forbidden. Even the geese were carefully disciplined, and were not allowed to wander away from their herds. "It was again commanded," notes the quaint old *Chronik der Stadt Meiningen*—the reiteration is pathetic—"that geese should be kept with their herds and not allowed to run about."

Thus everything in Meiningen was carefully arranged, every contingency provided for. It seems necessary to insist on this fact, because it partially accounts for Princess Adelaide's bewilderment when she was suddenly transported

from a small State in satisfactory working order—except for the troubles imposed on it from without—to a big, puzzling, unwieldy, and complicated kingdom.

On December 24th, 1803, Duke George died rather suddenly from a neglected cold, to the intense grief of his people. He was only forty-three, and he had governed Meiningen conscientiously and wisely. He was buried near his mother in the churchyard at Meiningen, and during her son's minority his widow, the Duchess Eleanor, assumed the reins of government. Troublous times awaited her, but she carried on the traditions of her husband's rule, and her administration was firm and beneficent.

The Princess Adelaide was eleven years old when her father died, and as all the Saxe-Meiningen Royal Family were much attached to each other, we may suppose that she felt his death very much. She and the Princess Ida were confirmed on April 10th, 1808, a suitable sermon for the occasion being preached by the court chaplain Emmrich, who had, as we have seen, the charge of their religious education.

Meanwhile the State of Meiningen, like all the small German states, was shaken by fear; for the armies of Napoleon were crossing and recrossing their country, and any province which did not bow meekly under the yoke of the Conqueror of Europe was liable to condign punishment. Even in the children's school-

room, discretion must have been carefully inculcated, for a careless word might mean destruction. So great was the stress that the usually emotionless *Meiningen Chronicle* is moved to the core, and beneath the cautious wording of its daily diary of facts we can perceive the mingled fear and indignation felt by those helpless principalities who, in fear of ruthless destruction, were forced to kiss the hand of the oppressor. On March 24th, 1811, Napoleon ordered that a thanksgiving service for the birth of the King of Rome should be held in all the churches. This must have been a hollow festival to the people of Meiningen, and the Court chaplain doubtless voiced their feelings when, with bitter irony, he preached on the text, "When the heart is sad, what help is outward joy?"

In addition to the humiliation and constant fear which hung over the people of Saxe-Meiningen, a considerable strain was imposed on the material resources of the town. Some of Napoleon's enactments must have been peculiarly galling. A special embargo was imposed on English manufactures, and orders were issued that all wagons containing these must be seized and confiscated as soon as they entered the town. Later, even more stringent manifestoes were promulgated. A search was ordered through all the shops in the town, and any English goods found in them were seized, buried under

clods of earth, and burnt. The wrath of the Meiningen merchants must have been all the deeper because it was impossible to give outward expression to it, for silence on the subject of France was enjoined throughout the town.

It was necessary, too, with bitter indignation to obey the orders of the French General Villein that a contribution to the budget of the French army should be made, and envoys sent with the money to the French headquarters.

At this time of stress isolation became impossible, and Meiningen joined the Confederation of the Rhine, and sent a contingent of 300 men to fight in the armies of the Allies against the French. Charitable collections were raised throughout the town for sufferers from the war—for the town of Phillippsburg, which was bombarded by the French, and for peasants whose homes had been destroyed. In the midst of the anxiety Duchess Eleanor fell dangerously ill, doubtless from the strain of overwork entailed by the cares of government at this distressing time.

The Princess Adelaide was now old enough to enter to a great extent into her mother's anxieties, and perhaps this heavily burdened youth may have partly accounted for the want of vitality on which some observers commented when she became wife of the Duke of Clarence.

The children in the Castle of Saxe-Meiningen must have become accustomed to watching the

passage of foreign troops through the streets. Sometimes the Prussian troops marched through. Then the unwelcome French would quarter themselves on the inhabitants. There were strict rules as to their requirements. They were to be provided with soup, meat, vegetables, and beer, but no wine, and it was promised that no destruction of property should be allowed. An Italian regiment would perhaps be the next visitor, and once the inhabitants had the satisfaction of seeing Spanish, Algerian, and Jager regiments file along—beautiful troops, our informant calls them.

Occasionally, among rumours and counter-rumours, a breath of hope came to the town. A solemn and no doubt heartfelt thanksgiving was held when the Peace of Tilsit was concluded between Napoleon and the Czar. There were also occasional pauses in the calamitous course of events, and during one of these the Royal Family travelled for three months in Switzerland.

We are told that it is often darkest before dawn, and certainly the year 1813, when Germany was beginning to hope that light was about to appear on her stormy horizon, was the year of the greatest suffering—at any rate to Meiningen. Any check or calamity to Napoleon's armies was kept absolutely secret, and only whispered rumours of misfortunes to their enemies reached the town.

Meanwhile the taxation was overwhelming,

and as every available lodging in the town was occupied, huts were built outside the walls for the occupation of the French soldiers. The misery was intense, for the wounded soldiers brought fever with them, and even the churchyard was full of unfortunate men, who lay out all night. The charitable were most anxious to bring them succour, but many of the townspeople were already dying of the fever, and the police forbade people to visit the wounded for fear of carrying infection. Eventually one woman was told off to carry the food provided. The sufferings of these unfortunates must have been intense, and many died, and were buried in trenches dug in the churchyard.

There was a breath of relief when the Prussian troops, bringing an atmosphere of security with them, rode through the distracted city. They were greeted with cries of joy. Surely the reign of the French oppressor was almost over, and indeed succour was at hand. On October 27th the cannonade was heard after the battle of Leipzig, in which, after terrible loss of life on both sides, the army of the Allies had beaten Napoleon, and on the following day the Russian staff rode in and were greeted with enthusiasm as the saviours of Germany.

The town was now in a joyous tumult, thronged with carriages and horses, while crowds of soldiers of different nationalities, Russians, Prussians, Austrians, Hungarians, Cossacks, Tartars,

and Croatians, swarmed about trying to find food and lodging for themselves and their steeds. Even the East was represented, for an English general had brought with him two Chinese servants. Never had Meiningen seen such sights before.

The next day was made momentous by the arrival of the Emperor Alexander. When, surrounded by his Cossack guard, he reached the city gates, an official was waiting to offer him the keys, but he refused to take them, saying that he had come not as foe, but as friend. The Princess Adelaide was now twenty-one years old, and she must have shared that night in the excitement at the Castle, where a great dinner was given, and, among many lesser lights, the Emperor of Russia, the Duke of Oldenburg, Field-Marshal the Prince of Schwarzenburg, Lord Cathcart the English Ambassador, and Count Metternich were entertained by the Duchess.

It was indeed a joyful day, and it was followed by a thrilling time. First came the departure of the Russian troops. They were on their way to Würzburg, and crowds rushed out to listen to the inspiring strains of the military band which accompanied them when they left Meiningen. That was a beautiful sight; and now the tramp of regiments was of constant occurrence, and when the townspeople went to their doors, they saw the soldiers of different nationalities marching by. Sometimes the



QUEEN ADELAIDE.

From a portrait by Sir William Beechey, R.A., in the National Portrait Gallery.

same troops would return and cross the streets in a different direction, for there was much marching backwards and forwards among the Allies.

The soldiers were often hungry-looking and miserably clad, and many of them were wounded. As in the exhilaration of victory there was sometimes fear that the injured might be forgotten, the Princesses Adelaide and Ida set the example of sending clothing and bandages to the armies; while in memory of the unfortunate foreign soldiers, over a hundred of whom had died in the town, some while lying unprotected in the open, it was decided that Meiningen should be provided with a hospital.

The news of the entry of the Allies into Paris arrived in Meiningen on April 9th, and to celebrate the great event guns were fired, and the Te Deum was sung in the churches. Shortly after this, a number of Frenchmen just released from the fortress of Erfürt passed through Meiningen; and then—greatest feast-day of all—the Meiningen troops arrived freed from their captivity at Mainz, and were received with poems, garlands, and inscriptions. The young Duke joined in the festivities, and, in honour of the occasion, was presented with a crown and also with a full cup. In all the villages throughout the dukedom similar celebrations took place.

After this the excitements of war were over, and the next event which affected the Princess

Adelaide must have stirred in her unselfish heart a mixture of feelings. For, at six o'clock in the evening, on May 30th, 1816, the solemn betrothal of her sister, the Princess Ida, to Bernhard, Duke of Weimar, was held in the Castle. There were, as usual on these occasions, many rejoicings accompanied by feasting throughout the province. On June 2nd the wedding took place in church. All the Princess Ida's country godmothers were entertained, the town was illuminated, and two days later, after the presentation of many poems, the newly married couple started for Weimar.

The Princess Adelaide had never before been separated from her sister, and though she may have rejoiced in that sister's happiness, it must have been with a sad heart that she settled down to life in the Castle without her. It was not long, however, before the Duchess of Weimar took the opportunity of her husband's absence from home to pay a visit to her mother and sister, who accompanied her back to Weimar as far as Cologne. The journey from there to Meiningen was an anxious one, as the Duchess of Meiningen was taken ill on the way, and it was some time before she could be moved. The following year the Duchess of Meiningen and Princess Adelaide returned the Duchess of Weimar's visit.

Otherwise nothing special happened to disturb the even tenor of life at Saxe-Meiningen.

Owing to the high taxation caused by the late war, and to the increase in the price of provisions, there was much distress throughout the country, and the Princess, concerning herself as she did all her life in the condition of the poor, formed an association of the women of the country to work hand in hand with the Poor-law Commission in discouraging begging, and in assisting deserving cases with food and with work. She went with her mother every year to the special service held in commemoration of the Reformation, and the two ladies were also present at the rejoicings in the town on the same occasion.

However, a change was soon to take place in the Princess's condition, for negotiations were on foot to marry her to the Duke of Clarence, and her betrothal to the Duke was announced at the Court held at Saxe-Meiningen on Sunday, April 19th, 1818. Three months later the Princess, accompanied by the Duchess of Meiningen, by two ladies-in-waiting, and by the Counsellors von Konitz and von Effa, started on her journey to England.

CHAPTER III

The English Royal Family—George III and Queen Charlotte—The Prince of Wales and Dukes of York, Cumberland, and Clarence—Their unpopularity—Liaison between the Duke of Clarence and Mrs. Jordan—The FitzClarence family—Their upbringing—Separation between the Duke of Clarence and Mrs. Jordan—His attempts at matrimony—Negotiations for his marriage with the Princess Adelaide—Monetary arrangements—Princess Adelaide's arrival in England—She comes to London—Is visited by George FitzClarence, the Regent, and the Duke of Clarence—Business negotiations and visits

WE must now turn to the personality of the man to whose keeping the happiness of the Princess Adelaide was entrusted.

The future William IV was born at Buckingham Palace on August 21st, 1765, and was therefore fifty-three years old at the time of his marriage to Princess Adelaide. At that time respect for the Royal Family seemed to have completely departed from England. The autocratic position assumed by George III, and the disasters which followed with regard to America, had raised a strong feeling of opposition to the Monarchy; and this was fostered by the spirit of unrest reigning over the Continent and by the labour troubles at home.

In his afflicted condition, public opinion had

softened towards the old King, and Queen Charlotte, though not spared by the scurrilous pamphleteers of the day, enjoyed a certain respect tempered by dislike. The doings of their sons, however, had brought royalty into complete disrepute. The indignation excited by the Regent's treatment of his wife, considered in conjunction with the scandals of his own life, seemed alone enough to wreck a stronger institution than the English Monarchy was at that time.

Though those who were brought into contact with the “ First Gentleman of Europe ” were charmed by his dignity and affability, and impressed by his undoubted social talent, he was hated by the bulk of the nation. “ The violence and the contempt expressed for the Prince Regent are beyond all imagination, and are truly shocking to hear of,”¹ wrote Lord Grenville to the Marquis of Buckingham in 1812. There was laughter in the House of Commons when Sir Robert Heron said : “ You have a prince who has so much dignity that he expends as great a sum on a thatched cottage as another monarch would on a palace ; so dignified is he, so magnificent are his ideas, that he cannot endure to see the same furniture in his house for two successive years ; he is such a friend to trade that he cannot give less than eight hundred guineas for a clock ; and such a protector is

¹ *Buckingham Papers*, vol. i. p. 335.

he of the arts that he pays six thousand pounds for a Chinese cabinet.”

George III's second and favourite son, the Duke of York, by whose death in 1828 the Duke of Clarence became heir to the throne, was popular, and appears to have been the most satisfactory among what was contemptuously called the College of Princes. As Commander-in-Chief of the army he did good work, though his name was besmirched in the lawsuit brought against his mistress, the notorious Mrs. Clarke, for selling commissions, and the disgrace of this lawsuit seriously affected his mother's health.

The life of the Duke of Kent before his marriage had furnished matter for scandal, and the infamous Duke of Cumberland seems to have possessed hardly a redeeming quality. Reading the facts of his life we cannot be surprised at his frequent portrayal by caricature as a horrible wood-demon.

Compared with some of his brothers, the kindly, garrulous Duke of Clarence showed to advantage. He did not indeed escape contempt nor evade ridicule. The circumstances of his life were not calculated to inspire respect, and in those days when scurrilous jests on the supposed motives, sayings, and doings and even personal appearance of the women as well as the men of the Royal Family were the fashion, he could hardly hope to remain unpilloried.

It was an ugly age, an age when a hard

flippancy of tone and want of moral elevation were characteristic of private correspondence as well as of the public press. Certainly where the Royal Family were concerned, no merciful veil was interposed to hide their failings and foibles. Even the *Times* had not assumed the Olympian dignity and reticence which was to become its characteristic fifty years later, and sometimes well deserved the nickname bestowed by its political opponents of "the Bludgeon" or "the Butcher paper."

Therefore ridicule was often the Duke of Clarence's portion, especially when in his long-winded speeches he involved himself in absurdities. The speech in which he remarked that as France had set the fashion of "cutting off the heads of their King and Queen, it was not at all improbable that the same system might be adopted in other countries, and Europe might exhibit the extraordinary spectacle of thrones without kings, and kings without heads," was long quoted against him. His harangue in defence of the slave-owners, in which he remarked that "the complexion of the slaves is the obstacle to every redress," not only covered him with ridicule, but made him for a time extremely unpopular.

His connection with Mrs. Jordan, the charming comedy actress, had not served to raise him in public estimation. When he and his mistress appeared in a box at the theatre and toyed

together before all the audience, severe paragraphs appeared in sundry of the papers. This was when the Duke of Clarence was twenty-six years of age, and Mrs. Jordan about three years older. By her he had ten children, to whom he was devoted, and these children were to exercise a formidable influence over the future life of the Princess Adelaide.

The eldest of the family, George Augustus Frederick FitzClarence, who on his father's accession became Earl of Munster, was born in 1794, and was therefore only two years younger than his stepmother. He appears to have been a man of considerable attainments, was Fellow of the Royal Society and of the Society of Antiquaries, and in 1841 became President of the Asiatic Society. In 1819 he married Mary Wyndham, natural daughter of the third Earl of Egremont. His early life had been spent in the army, and he had served through the Peninsular War. In 1842 he committed suicide, his mind having become affected through sufferings caused by gout.

Henry, the second son, died the year before his father's marriage. Frederick became a soldier and attained the rank of Lieutenant-General. He is described as much the best-looking of the sons. He married Lady Augusta Boyle, a daughter of the fourth Earl of Glasgow. Adolphus had a long career in the Navy and died unmarried. Most extraordinary stories are told

of Augustus, who seems to have been extremely eccentric. He had been put into holy orders, and a most unedifying clergyman he was ! He told Fanny Kemble, whom he met at a dance, that he hated the profession into which he had been forced, and spoke so disrespectfully of his father that she was obliged to stop him. He married Sarah, daughter of Lord Gordon.

Sophia, the eldest daughter, who was her father's favourite and exercised much influence over him, was a strong Tory, clever, satirical, and a great talker. In 1825 she married Sir Philip Sidney, who was created Lord de l'Isle and Dudley in 1835. She died at Kensington Palace in 1837. Mary, the second daughter, married in 1824 Colonel Fox, son to Lord Holland. Elizabeth, who was evidently good-looking and vivacious, for she reminded observers¹ of her mother in her favourite rôles, when her laugh was the quintessence of gaiety, was the first to marry, becoming Lady Erroll in December 1820. Augusta's first husband was the Honourable J. Kennedy Erskine, whom she married in 1827. He died in 1831, and in 1836 she married Lord Frederick Gordon, third son of the Marquis of Huntly. One of her daughters by her first marriage married her cousin, the second Earl of Munster.

The FitzClarences appear to have been treated during their childhood almost as though they

¹ *Creevey Papers*, vol. ii. p. 181.

were Royal princes and princesses. We read in the *Courier* of August 23rd, 1806, of a party given at Bushey Park, the Duke of Clarence's residence, on his forty-first birthday, at which the Prince of Wales led Mrs. Jordan to the head of the table, and she sat between him and the Duke of York, the Duke of Clarence taking the foot of the table. The *Courier* goes on : " The Duke's numerous family were introduced, and admired by the Prince, the Royal Dukes, and the whole company ; an infant in arms [Augustus], with a most beautiful white head of hair, was brought into the dining-room by the nursery-maid."

In time disagreements took place between the Duke of Clarence and his mistress, and his pecuniary embarrassments were so great that a rich marriage seemed the only means of extricating himself from them. Therefore in 1811 the Duke and Mrs. Jordan parted, and their separation caused much obloquy to fall on the Duke, who was accused of making his mistress provide for him during his connection with her, and of leaving her in straitened circumstances when it was over. It must be said in the Duke's defence that he assured Chantrey, whom he employed to make a monument to Mrs. Jordan after his accession to the throne, that he had never failed to pay the income of £2,000 he had promised for her maintenance after their parting, though he had often found great difficulty in doing this.¹

¹ *Miss Berry's Journal*, vol. iii. p. 463.

After his parting with Mrs. Jordan, the Duke proposed to the rich heiress Lady Catherine Long, who hurriedly engaged herself to someone else. He was next credited with a desire to marry Princess Anne of Denmark; but if this venture were really made, it came to nothing. He then offered his hand to Miss Elphinstone, who peremptorily rejected him. Discouraged by these rebuffs, the Duke does not appear to have contemplated matrimony again till the year 1817, when the death of the Princess Charlotte made it necessary for the Royal Dukes to provide themselves with wives in a hurry. The Duke of York was childless, and the Duke of Clarence came next in succession to the throne. Mrs. Jordan had died in Paris in 1816, so that obstacle to the Duke of Clarence's marriage, if it could be considered an obstacle, was removed. Therefore, though the *Morning Post* of February 7th, 1818, announced with dignity that "neither the Duke of Clarence nor the Duke of Kent have at present any intention of entering the matrimonial state," the Duke, who was certainly a matrimonial *enfant terrible*, promptly proposed to Miss Wykeham, and, to the horror of the Royal Family, was accepted.

Possibly the Duke was really attracted by this lady, who, besides being the possessor of £16,000 a year, wore spurs, and "leapt five-barr'd gates." The Council sat twice to deliberate on this very awkward business, and at last the united efforts

of the Regent, the Duke of York, Castlereagh, and Lord Liverpool were too strong for the Duke of Clarence, and after an interview, during which he was persuaded, reasoned with, scolded, and threatened, he was induced to abandon his intentions.

Nevertheless, it was certainly necessary that a wife should be found for him, and Queen Charlotte began to busy herself about the matter in good earnest. The public also busied itself, and matched the Duke with the Princess of Denmark, with "an heiress in Oxfordshire," evidently Miss Wykeham, and with a Princess of Hesse who was nineteen years old. "For he is the lad for bewitching them all," remarked the *Morning Post* with apparent gallantry, though we cannot help suspecting the writer of sarcastic intentions.

The news that a marriage between the Duke of Clarence and Princess Adelaide was in contemplation was received by the nation without enthusiasm, the general feeling being that an increase in the Duke's allowance would be expected, and would be an extra burden to the country. The fact that the Dukes of Cambridge and Kent were also about to marry, and would expect subsidies, roused a feeling of stubborn opposition throughout the country.

The circumstances of the lives of these Royal personages had not entitled them to respect. The general feeling about their irregular con-

nections was expressed by a caricature of the time entitled "Poor Johnny ridden to Death," which represents John Bull groaning under the weight of one couple, while behind is a basket in which some of the FitzClarences are seated, while others fall out of it into the river Jordan.

The Duke of Wellington gave voice to the sentiments of many worthy people when, speaking on the question of the allowances to the Royal Princes, he said with his usual directness, "By God! there is a great deal to be said about that. They [the Princes] are the damndest millstone about the necks of any Government that can be imagined. They have insulted—personally insulted—two-thirds of the gentlemen of England, and how can it be wondered at that they take their revenge upon them when they get them in the House of Commons? It is their only opportunity, and I think, by God! they are quite right to use it." ¹

The first proposition brought forward was that the Duke of Clarence should receive an addition to his income of £19,000 a year, and a jointure of £8,000, while the Dukes of Kent, Cumberland, and Cambridge should each receive £12,000 a year, and £9,000 in jointures. Great hostility was shown in the House of Commons to these proposals. "We wish," says the *Times* of March 20th, 1818, "there had been a skilful carica-

¹ *Creevey Papers*, vol. i. p. 277.

turist present to give us the countenances, the looks, the stares, the shrugs, of the attendant members when the various exorbitant sums were mentioned." Brougham spoke with eloquence of the "burdened state of the country," and brought forward the facts that the Royal Dukes each received £18,000 a year, exclusive of their appointments, and were free from direct and assessed taxes. Eventually it was proposed that William should receive an addition of £10,000 to his income, but by a majority of nine this was vetoed, and the sum was fixed at £6,000.

The Duke of Clarence, furious at this check, refused the offer of £6,000 a year, and announced with his usual candour that he would not marry at all unless the larger sum were granted to him. On April 16th Lord Castlereagh informed the House of Commons that the Duke of Clarence had broken off the negotiations about his marriage. As Canning put the matter in graceful remonstrance, "It would never have been in the contemplation of his Royal Highness to contract the alliance under discussion, if it had not been pressed on him as an act of public duty."

It was little wonder that the *Times*, with plain-speaking usual in those days, characterised the transaction as revolting and indelicate, and remarked, "A certain German Princess is but ill off, considering all things"¹—an opinion many people will share with the writer.

¹ *Times*, March 20th, 1818.

BETROTHAL TO PRINCESS ADELAIDE 43

However, the Duke of Clarence eventually changed his mind, and on April 19th, 1818, his betrothal to the Princess Adelaide was publicly announced in Saxe-Meiningen, and the Princess was the recipient of general congratulations.

It is to be hoped that the seamy side of the transaction, as revealed by the Parliamentary debates and the comments thereon in the English newspapers, was hidden from the Princess. Even on the surface the situation was hardly attractive. She had indeed attained the age of twenty-six, a very mature one for an unmarried princess; but an alliance with a man nearly thirty years older than herself, who with distressing want of gallantry announced that he was only becoming her husband from a stern sense of duty, and furthermore that this sense of duty would not be sufficient support unless reinforced by a large grant of money, was hardly a prospect to inspire enthusiasm.

However, from a worldly point of view, the chance that the little State of Saxe-Meiningen might provide England with a queen, or at any rate with a princess who might be the mother of kings, was too brilliant a prospect to be lightly thrown away, and the Princess Adelaide, though miserable, submitted to her fate without serious resistance. She did, however, insist on delay, and apparently wrote several rather doubtful letters about the matter, being in a state of mind which the Duke of Clarence, with a charmingly

high estimate of his own charms as a husband, translated as "a resolution not *to be at once* dazzled by the offer, but seriously to reflect on the step she means to take."¹

That, instead of fearing that the delight and excitement of the prospect of becoming Duchess of Clarence would be so great that she must wait till the glamour of the first proposal was over for reflection on the necessary details, the unfortunate Princess was trying to overcome her abhorrence to the prospect, never seems to have entered the mind of the naïvely important and self-satisfied Duke of Clarence. "My daughters once happily and respectably married," he wrote, "I do look forward with every fair prospect of happiness, considering the high character the Princess Adelaide bears, and the insight that her letters give me into her mind."

The monetary arrangements between the Princess and the Duke of Clarence were concluded on June 19th, the day before the Princess started on her journey to England. Her dowry was to consist of 20,000 florins, from which, as long as she was childless, she was to receive interest at the rate of 5 per cent. When children came, however, she was to have 5,000 florins a year. The State of Saxe-Meiningen was also to provide her with an income of 6,000 florins a year as pin-money. William, on his side, promised that he would maintain the house-

¹ *Harcourt Papers*, vol. vi. p. 121.

hold of his future bride, and would in addition give her £2,000 a year. If his income were augmented—doubtless from his becoming nearer in succession to the throne—her allowance should, he promised, be increased to £3,000.

On a second document the Regent undertook, on behalf of George III, that in the event of the death of the Duke of Clarence, the Duchess should, during her widowhood, receive £6,000 a year.

These two important documents discussed, drawn up, signed, sealed, and witnessed, it would have seemed natural that the Royal bridegroom should have gone to Saxe-Meiningen for the wedding, or at least to make the acquaintance of his future wife. However, as he professed his inability to do this, the Princess started on her journey on June 20th, 1818—just two months after the announcement of her engagement.

It is to be hoped that Queen Charlotte's condescension in writing to the bride before hearing from her—a step which caused the Duke of Clarence to express himself with ecstasy at his mother's tenderness and affection for him—may have slightly compensated for the bridegroom's want of enthusiasm. But even the family welcome implied in the fact that the Duchess of York and all the Princesses followed the Queen's example can hardly have made the Princess's heart less heavy.

The Princess was accompanied to England by her mother and by two ladies and two gentlemen

in waiting. Some idea of the difference in the conditions of travelling in 1818 from what they are now, may be gathered by the fact that ten days were spent on the journey to Calais, where the Royal party arrived at eight o'clock on a beautiful evening. They were at once visited at their hotel by Admiral Keith and his officers, who brought information that a Royal yacht was awaiting their orders.

At nine o'clock next morning the Duchess and her daughter embarked for England. The sea was rough, the eight hours' voyage to Deal cannot have been a pleasant experience, and between fatigue and gloomy presentiments the Princess Adelaide's spirits were doubtless at a low ebb. The Royal party were received with great acclamations on their arrival in England, cavalry and infantry lined the shore, the assembled ships hoisted their flags, and a crowd had collected to see the Princess land.

The Princess's first night in her future country was spent at Deal, and the next morning she and her mother, attended by Lord Keith and by their German attendants, started on their drive to London. The Princess would, in time, become acquainted with the English people in a very different temper, but the fact that they would never understand her, nor she them, was fortunately hidden from her, and her misgivings were no doubt concentrated on the purely personal aspects of her married life.

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The journey from Deal to London occupied two days, and on July 4th, 1818, the Royal party, followed rather later by their luggage, arrived in the Prince Regent's carriages at Grillon's Hotel in Albemarle Street. It was an unobtrusive entry into the capital, the fact that his future bride found a lodging in a hotel instead of a palace no doubt chiming in well with the trend of mind of the casual, undignified Duke of Clarence. He was in no hurry to make the Princess's acquaintance, but sent George FitzClarence, his eldest son, who stayed with the Royal ladies the whole evening, to be the first to greet her. The Duke of Clarence was devoted to his children, and intended that his future wife should take her place as one of a large and happy family circle. It seemed hardly tactful, however, to bring into prominence before the shrinking eyes of the Princess on her first arrival, irregular relations which must have been peculiarly abhorrent to her feelings.

At ten o'clock the Regent drove up to pay his visit of ceremony, and Princess Adelaide was introduced to the man whose morals were a scandal to Europe. He was followed by the Royal bridegroom, who stayed till nearly eleven o'clock.

Nothing is reported of the interview between him and his future bride, and we can only guess the feelings of the Princess when, at the end of what must have been to one of her delicate

physique a most exhausting fortnight, she was introduced to her middle-aged, garrulous, unpolished bridegroom. We may guess, however, that even were her agitation great, nothing of it appeared on the surface. Her manners were good, she was possessed of much reticence and self-control, and she doubtless behaved suitably, and with the sense of propriety natural to her.

Neither can the Duke of Clarence's impressions be recorded. He was an admirer of feminine beauty; he had wished to marry Miss Wykeham, the dashing girl who used her spurs with energy across country, leapt five-barred gates, and was in all respects the type of the modern Amazon who has always had attractions for mankind. He had been for many years in all but name the husband of one of the most charming, if not the most beautiful, women of her day. Now he was confronted by a thin, plain person with a bad complexion. It may be that he was prepared for what he saw; it is to be hoped, at any rate, that his natural indiscretion was curbed by his kindliness, and that if he were disappointed, no hint of his dismay reached the tired woman in a strange land, whose happiness was to be confided to his keeping.

The interview was short, for the Duke of Clarence did not arrive till after ten o'clock and left before eleven, and the following day was given up to business—though indeed in a certain sense the whole affair *was* nothing but



GEORGE AUGUSTUS FREDERICK FITZCLARENCE, FIRST EARL OF MUNSTER.

From a picture in the possession of the Earl of Munster.

business. The negotiations on the part of the Princess and her family were undertaken by the Freiherr von Konitz. The Princess and her mother stayed indoors all day, and the latter must have found much to occupy her, in consultations with the Freiherr on the doubtful points under discussion. The Duke of Clarence called several times that day, but whether to improve the acquaintance of the Princess, or to assist in the business negotiations, is not apparent.

The next few days were spent in the visits and reception of visits which usually precede a Royal wedding. One day the Duchess of Saxe-Meiningen and her daughter drove in Hyde Park and over Vauxhall Bridge; another they went to Kew House to visit the Duke of Cambridge, to Kew Palace to see Queen Charlotte (now in a dying condition), and back to Kew House, where they dined with the Duke of Cambridge and his family. On other days they were visited by different members of the Royal Family, and one evening the Prince Regent gave a grand dinner at Carlton House in their honour, with an entertainment afterwards, during which the band of the Coldstream Guards played in the conservatory.

The English people generally took little interest in the future Duchess of Clarence. She was only one of several new Royal Duchesses whose dowries would have to be extracted from

the already overburdened taxpayers. The Duke of Kent and the Duke of Cambridge were also marrying, and indignation at the extravagance of the Royal brothers, and at the impoverished condition of the country is expressed with much plain speaking in the political satires of the time.

CHAPTER IV

Royal weddings in 1818—The “race for an heir”—The Princess Elizabeth and the Duke of Cambridge—Marriage of the Duke of Kent to Princess of Leiningen and the Duke of Clarence to Princess Adelaide of Saxe-Meiningen—Dress of the two brides—Bridal dinner—Tea in Kew Gardens—Arrival at St. James’s Palace—Departure of the Duchess of Saxe-Meiningen—Entertainment at Carlton House—The FitzClarence daughters—The Duke and Duchess of Clarence prepare to go to Hanover—The Duchess of Clarence bids goodbye to Queen Charlotte—She and the Duke start for Hanover—Life in Hanover—Death of infant daughter born to Duke and Duchess of Clarence—Her serious illness—The Duke and Duchess travel—They return to England

PRINCESS ADELAIDE was not destined to be the sole focus of interest even at her own wedding. The year 1818 had already witnessed two royal marriages in England, and the festivities attendant on princely espousals were expensive. Therefore the sneers and gibes of the wits of the period on the subject of what was called “The Race for an Heir” were infused with intense bitterness.

However, the Princess Elizabeth, who had been married on April 7th at the mature age of forty-eight, could hardly have been credited with this ambition, and the very unpleasant sarcasm which had been indulged in on the occasion can

only be traced to the great unpopularity of the Royal Family at this period. Extremely coarse were the jokes lavished on the "Two Royal Humbugs," as the unfortunate Princess and her bridegroom the Landgrave of Hesse-Homburg were jocosely called. We are told that the English spoken by the Landgrave was so comic that during the wedding ceremony Queen Charlotte burst into a fit of uncontrollable laughter. He was supposed never to indulge in a bath, and to hate the idea of a honeymoon in the country. The head and front, however, of the unfortunate man's offence in the eyes of the public, an offence shared by his bride, was the fact of their extreme stoutness.

This wedding had taken place on April 7th, and towards the end of June the Duke of Cambridge married the Princess of Hesse-Cassel, a marriage which was politely designated as "More Humbugs, Or Another Attack on John Bull's Purse." Even the thick-skinned children of George III thought that it would not answer to press the nation's much-tried patience over-much. Therefore as it was necessary to repeat in England the marriage that had already taken place in Germany between the widowed Princess of Leiningen, sister to Prince Leopold, and the Duke of Kent, it was decided that this should be performed simultaneously with the marriage of the Duke of Clarence.

The double wedding was put off from July 11th

till July 13th, because of the state of Queen Charlotte's health. It is interesting to speculate whether the Queen's extreme anxiety for these tardy Royal weddings had its origin in a feeling that she had somewhat neglected her duty towards her numerous children, and that much unhappiness, and indeed grave scandal in the family might have been obviated had she tried to find suitable husbands and wives for her family when they were young. She seems to have been specially interested in the Princess Adelaide, who had been her choice for her son, and was, except for delicate health, a particularly happy one.

Meanwhile with the country generally the Duke of Cambridge's marriage was more popular than that of the Duke of Clarence, who had alienated public sympathy by his pettish refusal to marry if he were not provided with the income he demanded, and also by his pseudo-married life with Mrs. Jordan, and his desertion of her. "After you'd got her money too, Which she so freely gave to you," rhymed the formidable Peter Pindar, thus voicing the popular view.

In preparation for the double wedding, the Queen's drawing-room at Kew Palace had been fitted up with an altar adorned with massive Communion plate, with a rail, and with velvet cushions for four persons. There the Royal Family began to assemble at three o'clock. The Duke

of York, the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester, the Princess Sophia of Gloucester, the Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel, and the Duchess of Saxe-Meiningen were present; also the Lord Chancellor, Viscount Sidmouth, the Earl of Liverpool, the Count and Countess of Münster, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Bishop of London.

A little before four Queen Charlotte was conducted into the room by the Prince Regent, and took her place to the right of the altar. The two brides were given away by the Prince Regent. The Princess Adelaide wore a robe of silver tissue trimmed with two broad flounces of beautiful Brussels lace, her train being of silver tissue adorned by Brussels lace, fastened at the waist with a diamond clasp. On her head she wore a wreath of diamonds. The Duchess of Kent's dress was of gold tissue.

Directly after the ceremony the Queen retired to her own room, and the Prince Regent and the rest of the company sat down to a magnificent dinner, with turtle and other soups, fish, and venison. The *Times* chronicler comments specially on the excellence of the dessert, which comprised melons, pines, grapes, and peaches. This over, the Duke and Duchess of Kent drove away in Prince Leopold's carriage drawn by four horses, and the rest of the Royal party repaired to the cottage near the pagoda in Kew Gardens, where they drank tea. When this was

over, the Duke and Duchess of Clarence drove in a new chariot with their joint arms emblazoned on it to the Duke of Clarence's apartments in St. James's Palace, which were brilliantly illuminated for the occasion, a lustre in the drawing-room being specially mentioned. It is characteristic of the Duchess of Clarence that, though it was raining, she waited patiently on the balcony from eight to nine o'clock to show herself to the crowd below.

The marriage contract had still to be signed by the Royal couple. This was done at the house of Lord Liverpool, the Prime Minister, who signed for the insane King George III.

Her daughter married, there was no need for the Duchess of Saxe-Meiningen to linger in England; and the next day the Duchess of Clarence gave her first dinner party, at which she entertained her mother with her suite, and then the Duchess started on her homeward journey.

It must have been a satisfaction to the King's Ministers to feel that the Duke of Clarence, the matrimonial *enfant terrible* of the Royal Family, was at last safely united to a wife of suitable rank, one, moreover, who did not appear likely to emulate the manners of the Princess of Wales, of whose doings during her wanderings over Europe strange and unedifying reports were in circulation.

The new Royal Duchesses, however, shared in

the discredit which had fallen on the English Monarchy, and were received by the public without enthusiasm. On July 15th, 1818, Mr. Fremantle writes to the Marquis of Buckingham and says, speaking of an entertainment at Carlton House : “ There was a grand display of all the Royal Duchesses, one more ugly than another. I think the manners of the Duchess of Clarence the best ; and the look of the Duchess of Kent—the latter rather *en bon point*, the former, thinner than Madame de Lieven. The thing was dull and heavy, and I thought people much out of spirits.”¹

We have several glimpses of the Duchess in these early married days, and she is always represented as behaving with politeness and propriety. We are told that when she went with her husband to see his friends Mr. and Mrs. Wood, who provided an “ elegant collation ” for the Royal couple, the hosts “ were much flattered by the condescending affability of the interesting and amiable Duchess.”

A notice in the *Times* signifies a noteworthy alteration in William’s family life. It is a short one. “ The Misses FitzClarence moved to South Audley Square.” Here they were established with a governess named Miss Cooper, whom the Duke of Clarence before his marriage had been most anxious to secure for them. He writes to

¹ *Buckingham Papers: Court of England during the Regency*, vol. ii. p. 267.



[GEORGE IV.

From a portrait by Hoppner, in the possession of Miss FitzClarence.

Lady Harcourt : " I do hope and believe Miss Cooper will accept the situation about my dear daughters. I have so many and excellent reasons to wish it, that I trust Miss Cooper will bring herself to take charge of what is nearest my heart." ¹

These daughters were some of them children, and all, Sophia, Mary, Elizabeth, Augusta, and Amelia, were unmarried at this time, and had hitherto lived at their father's house at Bushey. Their change of residence was necessary, and no doubt was insisted on by Queen Charlotte and the Duchess of Saxe-Meiningen. It must, however, have been painful to the Duke of Clarence to part from his daughters, and possibly their natural resentment at the separation and the loss of position it entailed, did not tend to brighten the first months of the Duchess of Clarence's sojourn in England.

However, three weeks after their marriage the Duke and Duchess of Clarence started for Hanover.

Many rumours were afloat about this journey, one of them being that the Duke of Clarence was about to oust his younger brother, the Duke of Cambridge, both from his Palace and also from the position of Governor-General which he held in Hanover. In reality the Duke of Clarence went out without any official position, and it was specially enjoined that he and the Duchess

¹ *Harcourt Papers*, vol. vi. p. 121.

should yield precedence to the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge.

The Duke of Clarence's pecuniary difficulties were doubtless his reason for expatriating himself directly after his marriage. In a fit of anger because the House of Commons denied him the grant of £10,000 a year he demanded, he had refused their offer of an annual addition of £6,000 to his income, and he was, as usual, deeply in debt. England being now useless as a Tom Tiddler's ground, without demeaning himself to an extent which could not be contemplated with equanimity even by the essentially undignified Duke of Clarence, Hanover must be put under requisition to supply his necessities.

It is possible, too, that Queen Charlotte, whom the Duchess of Clarence seems always to have regarded as her friend and well-wisher, and who was no doubt specially anxious that the marriage for which she was responsible should be a success, thought that the Duchess would have more chance of attaching the Duke to herself if he were for a time separated from his numerous family.

However that may be, Queen Charlotte was the one person in England who had become dear to the Duchess of Clarence during her short stay there, and from whom she parted with genuine regret. She feared she would never see the Queen again, and longed to be able to express her gratitude for her Majesty's kindness to her.

This was impossible, for Queen Charlotte, hard, brave, and reserved to the last, refused to take leave of anybody, or even to allow any mention of her health in her presence.

Therefore when the Duchess went to say good-bye to her mother-in-law, the conversation glided over indifferent subjects; and she was at last obliged to say good-night without any opportunity of expressing her affection for the dying woman or her grief at parting from her. After she had left the room and closed the door, she could not bear to feel that she would most probably never see the Queen again, so she opened it softly that she might at least look at her once more. The Queen heard, called her back, and perhaps was touched by her evident distress, though she only spoke on some indifferent subject, and the Duchess never saw her again.

On August 3rd, 1818, the Duke and Duchess of Clarence left St. James's Palace, and, attended by Sir John Borlase Warren, Baroness Duran, and their suite, started in three carriages for Dover. Here they dined at the Ship Inn, and embarked that evening on the *Royal Sovereign* yacht for Calais. They travelled by Calais, Ghent (where they stayed a few days), Antwerp, Deventer, Bentheim, Osnabrück, Diepholz, and Nieuberg.

At Hanover they took up their abode in the Fürsten Hof, which was situated in what was then the new part of the town. The house

they occupied is now No. 58 in the Lange Strasse. The Duke soon tired of his exile, and in letters which were shown publicly, and evidently written for that purpose, he wrote that the Duchess was pregnant, and that he and she were both most anxious that their child should be born in England.

Later, when these hopes had been disappointed, he wrote again saying that in domestic matters Hanover was most uncomfortable, that house-rent was as high as in England, and that food and clothing were more expensive. Nothing, he declared, should stand in the way of his speedy return.

He does not, however, seem to have had much to complain of in respect to money matters, for the Regent allowed him 12,000 thalers a month during his stay in Hanover, as well as wine, firing, game, fruit, and vegetables, and the use of eight horses and two carriages. These last, however, were not to be used for travelling. Stabling was also provided, and in addition a maître d'hôtel, a cook, and six footmen. These luxuries were paid for by the State of Hanover apparently without complaint, at any rate without resistance.

In Hanover the Duke and Duchess of Clarence led a quiet life, with the ever-strengthening hope of being parents to the heir to the British Crown. Their relations with the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge were extremely cordial. "It gives

me great pleasure to hear that my brothers and their Dutchesses draw so well together at Hanover, which does them all credit,"¹ writes the Dowager Queen of Würtemberg.

The Duchess of Cambridge was also enceinte, the birth of her child being expected before that of the Duchess of Clarence.

On March 26th, 1819, the Duke of Clarence was present when a boy was born to his sister-in-law. He must have been in no cheerful frame of mind, for a few days earlier the Duchess of Clarence had been seized with illness. Bleeding was the principal curative agent in those days, and this was at once resorted to, with the result that on March 26th, at half-past six in the morning, a premature birth took place. The infant, who was baptised with the names of Charlotte Augusta Louisa, only lived till one in the afternoon, and was buried in the Royal vault in the Castle Chapel, the service being conducted by Dr. Sextro, the Court chaplain.

For several days after the baby's birth the Duchess of Clarence was dangerously ill, and no festivities could therefore be given to celebrate the birth of the Duke of Cambridge's son. It was not till April 5th that the Duchess of Clarence was pronounced by the doctors to be out of danger.

"The Duke of Clarence's sad sad disappointment

¹ *Harcourt Papers*, vol. vi. Letter from Queen of Würtemberg, September 2nd, 1818.

was deeply felt by me, who am much attached to William, and who know too well what it is to lose one's only child not to pity those who have the same misfortune," wrote the Dowager Queen of Würtemberg. "I trust this amiable little Dutchess will soon recover her strength; by all accounts she is the very woman calculated to suite my dear William's taste, and he loves her very much. His letters to me are always full of her, and it does me good to see he is attached to her and feels himself happy."¹

It was a melancholy time for the Clarences, for anxiety about the Duchess's health and disappointment at the loss of the child had made the Duke ill also. By April 17th, however, he had recovered, and she was better.

The Duke and Duchess were now anxious to cut themselves adrift from the scene of their disappointment as quickly as possible, and it was settled that they should pay a visit to the Queen of Würtemberg. Before leaving Hanover, however, the Duke went with his brother to inspect the archives, where he caused copies to be taken of the marriage contracts and wills of his forefathers, that he and his brother might know to what they were in the future entitled.

After visiting the Queen of Würtemberg—before her marriage Princess Royal of England—the Duke and Duchess of Clarence went to see

¹ *Harcourt Papers*, vol. vi. Letter from Queen of Würtemberg, April 20th, 1818.

the Landgräfin of Hesse. Thence they travelled to Meiningen, that the Duchess, who was in a very weak condition, might be strengthened by a course of the Liebenstein waters.

Meanwhile an event had taken place in England which was destined to have an enormous influence on the English nation, for on May 24th, 1819, the future Queen Victoria was born at Kensington Palace.

The Duke and Duchess now started on their homeward journey. They travelled by Cologne and the Netherlands, but in spite of all possible precautions the Duchess was again taken ill, and at Dunkirk the Royal yacht was kept waiting because she had had a miscarriage. On September 25th, 1819, the Duke and Duchess at last arrived at Dover, and there a stay of some time was made that the Duchess might go through a course of sea baths.

On their way from Dover to London the Duke and Duchess did a little sightseeing. They visited Canterbury Cathedral, and stayed at Sir John Moore's house to inspect the engineering works at Chatham—"stupendous new works," as the *Times* admiringly terms them. They did not arrive at Clarence House till the middle of November, and now the Duchess began her first experience of English life.

CHAPTER V

Conditions of living when Princess Adelaide arrived in England
—Exhaustion of the country—Distress among the poor—
Harsh penal code—State of prisons, lunatic asylums—Light-
ing of London, its geography—Dangers of the streets—
Condition of the lower classes—Disturbances—The Blan-
keteers—The Catholics of Ireland—Bill for Catholic Emanci-
pation—Tone of newspapers—Description of fashionable
Hyde Park—Drinking—Suicides—A locomotive machine—
Want of taste in England

BEFORE proceeding further with the actual doings of the Duchess of Clarence, it may be interesting to glance, if only in very cursory fashion, at the England in which she found herself.

We often seem to know more of Tudor or of Stuart England than of that England of a hundred years ago which is near us, and yet in some ways strangely distant. In forms of expression, even in point of view, the Englishman of ninety or a hundred years ago differed little from ourselves. Reading the letters and memoirs of the period, we are not transported to a strange country, as we are when Swift presents us to the smart society of the preceding century, and we listen amazed to the sparkling but—to our

ears—extraordinary conversation of Lord Sparkish, Lord Smart, and Miss Notable.

The change, however, which has taken place in the conditions of actual life since Queen Adelaide first lived in England, is enormous compared with that which occurred during the eighteenth century. The Napoleonic wars, and the struggle for independence in America, had caused the eyes of British legislators to be fixed almost entirely on foreign affairs. When they had leisure to examine into the internal condition of England, when indeed that condition, which they long managed to ignore, at last forced itself on their attention, it was found to be that of an Augean stable. The exhausted condition of the country after two great wars, and the pernicious Corn Laws of 1802, which were framed in the interest of the landowners without any consideration of the effect they would have on the poor, had caused general distress, and the people looked with ardent hope to a reform of Parliamentary representation as a panacea for all their ills.

The great change, however, brought about by this Reform Bill—a change which the Duchess of Clarence would watch with uncomprehending eyes, always fearing the French Revolution was about to repeat itself—was the transfer of political power from the aristocracy, not to the people, but to the members of a rich middle class, conscious of the stake they possessed in

the country, and indignant that no adequate Parliamentary representation was allowed them.

The minds of men had outgrown their circumstances, and to bring about an adjustment, an upheaval was necessary. The severities of an obsolete penal code outraged the moral feeling of those compelled to administer it, with the result that the offender was often acquitted through pity. In 1816 some amelioration had been made in the criminal law, but sheepstealers, coiners, forgers, and burglars were still hanged in batches, and crowds hurried to watch the exciting and exhilarating spectacle.

Those convicted of offences not punishable with death fared badly. The prison at Ilchester was evidently a byword, but it seems extraordinary that in any prison in the United Kingdom as late as the year 1822 it should have been possible for prisoners to be chained so that they could not stand upright, to be blistered as a torture, or for a young woman with an infant to be kept in solitary confinement from Thursday to Sunday, with nothing to eat for herself and her infant but bread and water, and no fire when snow was on the ground.

The horrors of the Fleet prison, where debtors were confined, are described to us by Dickens in the *Pickwick Papers*, when Mr. Pickwick says, looking down a dark and filthy staircase appearing to lead to a range of damp and gloomy stone vaults beneath the ground: "And those, I sup-

pose, are the little cellars where the prisoners keep their small quantities of coal. Unpleasant places to have to go down to; but very convenient, I dare say."

"Yes, I shouldn't wonder if they was convenient," replied the warder, "seeing that a few people live there, pretty snug."

When Pickwick expresses indignation, Rokeby says fiercely, "Live down there! yes, and die down there too, very often, and what of that? Who's got anything to say agin it?"

People were, however, beginning to raise their voices against the treatment meted out to men who were probably only unfortunate, and in 1824 the *Times* commented on one of the greatest abuses of the system, by which the discharged debtor was not released till he had paid the prison fees, which he was in most cases totally unable to do. In fact, a healthy indignation at the prevailing condition of affairs was beginning to arise, and the daily press did useful work in dragging abuses to the light and refusing to allow them to be forgotten.

The condition of the private lunatic asylums was most unsatisfactory. In one of these the *Times* tells us that a perfectly sane man was placed in a narrow niche in one of the walls, and drenched with water till he was almost suffocated because he was furious at his imprisonment. This unfortunate being was kept in confinement and fed on the coarsest fare for

over a year. On another occasion a tradesman was shut up by his wife and her lover, and only gained liberty by managing at last to throw a note describing his condition from an upper window.

The London in which the Princess Adelaide and her mother arrived after a slow and uncomfortable journey across the Channel differed greatly from the London of to-day. Gas had been introduced in 1807, but in 1818 Pall Mall was the only thoroughfare illuminated by it, the other streets of the metropolis being lit by oil lamps furnished with patent reflectors. Buckingham Palace, formerly occupied by the Dukes of Buckingham, was not yet converted into a Royal residence. That was done a few years later by Nash for George IV, when it was known as "the King's new palace in St. James's Park." It cost over £90,000, which caused general indignation, and George IV never inhabited it. His town residence was Carlton House, and Regent Street had been built to connect this with Regent's Park, which had only lately been planned and planted with trees.

Where Trafalgar Square and the National Gallery now stand was a deserted waste, to the north of which rose the King's mews, a highly expensive establishment. St. James's Park, which then stretched over where Buckingham Palace now stands, was railed round and only accessible to animals, and though the wall

which ran along the south side of Hyde Park had been demolished, wretched hovels hid any sight of the Park from those who drove or walked along the road from Piccadilly to Kensington.

The fashionable quarter was then located between Piccadilly and Oxford Street. Portland Place, however, was considered within the radius of elegance, and thence it was possible to walk into Marylebone Park, and into fields north and east of the Edgware Road where snipe could be shot. The waste lands of Paddington were traversed by an evil-smelling canal and had a bad reputation. A road called Five Fields, bordered by mudbanks, led northward from the wastes of Pimlico to Grosvenor Place, where the Lock Hospital was situated.

The poor quarters about Tottenham Court Road and in the celebrated Seven Dials contained horrors beyond our conception, and were unsanitary, miserable, and unsafe to traverse at night. The overcrowding in many parts of London was terrible. In buildings near Portman Square, a small court containing twenty-four houses gave shelter to 700 Irish; while in George's Yard, Whitechapel, 2,000 people lived in forty houses. There were no police, and watchmen were the only guardians of law and order in the streets, unless matters were serious, when the services of the military were requisitioned.

Drunkenness was rampant. "No decent woman, even in broad daylight, could at the holiday

seasons dare to walk alone in the Strand or Pall Mall, much less in the regions into which flowed all the filth of the adjacent Seven Dials ! ”¹

A curious idea of the state of even the fashionable parts of the metropolis is given by a paragraph in the *Times* of 1821, in which it says that St. James's Palace, where the Duke and Duchess of Clarence had their apartments, was in a most disorderly condition, being surrounded by loafers and depraved women, who slept in the corners of the palace courtyard, and in the avenue leading to St. James's Park, and even molested the Duke of York when he went out. The watchmen or constables could do nothing, having no jurisdiction within the Palace precincts, and it was necessary to appoint special guardians of order, who were given the title of marshalmen, to restore respectability to the neighbourhood.

Philanthropy was in its infancy, one of the most striking features of the time, of course with notable exceptions, being the absolute ignorance of the condition of their poorer neighbours shown by members of the upper classes. This could hardly be wondered at, as, at any rate in London, the lower classes were congregated in such filthy dens that it was dangerous—indeed, well nigh impossible—for respectable people to penetrate into them.

The condition of the lower classes was de-

¹ C. Knight, *Passages of a Working Life*, vol. ii, p. 25.

plorable. The Poor Law, which was the only means of ministering to their wants, made hundreds of paupers, and did not relieve real distress. It was designated by the French Commissioners who visited this country to examine into its working as the "political gangrene of England." Owing to the Corn Law of 1802, which was planned to support the landed interest, in times of scarcity a quartern loaf had been known to cost a shilling and ninepence. The average wage of a Dorsetshire labourer was eight shillings a week; and the Earl of Cassillis—while speaking, with the calmness of an aristocracy which felt that the country had been created for its delectation, of the necessity of putting down insurrection with a firm hand—mentions a weaver on his estate whose weekly earnings were only a shilling and sevenpence, though he worked fourteen to sixteen hours a day!¹

The card-room hands in the Manchester factories earned, strippers twelve shillings, tenters eight and sixpence daily, and the wages of Yorkshire labourers were twelve to fifteen shillings weekly.

In 1815 and 1816 there was a complete paralysis of industry. Whole parishes were deserted by their starving inhabitants. The unfortunate people considered that their misery originated in the introduction of machinery, and disturbances were rife throughout the

¹ *Buckingham Papers: Memoirs of the Regency*, vol. ii. p. 374.

country. Ricks were burnt, threshing and weaving machines destroyed, and the so-called Blanketeers marched to London singing the Marseillaise. The Government became alarmed, they suppressed the meetings of the complainants with a strong hand, and the Manchester Massacre filled the country with indignation. It was followed by what was known as the Cato Street Conspiracy, an attempt to murder the Ministers at a Cabinet dinner given by Lord Harrowby.

These events happened shortly after Princess Adelaide's arrival in England, and it is little wonder that they filled her with terror at the idea of an impending catastrophe which would obliterate existing landmarks, and in all probability the Monarchy with them.

Other causes for alarm existed. In the prosperity following the great wars a spirit of gambling seemed to have been let loose over the land, and in the autumn of 1825 a great retribution followed. Panic ensued, many commercial houses failed, and sixty to seventy banks stopped payment.

At that time of distress even the burning question of Catholic Emancipation in Ireland took a secondary place; but the trouble once over, it assumed its prominent position, and the papers were full of accounts of the doings of O'Connell and of the dreaded Catholic Association.

Ever since the Act of Union in 1800 the

Catholics of Ireland had clamoured for the removal of their disabilities. No Catholic could sit in either of the Houses of Parliament, hold any municipal office, or be guardian to a Protestant. George III was strongly hostile to Catholic emancipation, and had reproached Lord Chatham with causing his attack of insanity by forcing the question upon him. The Regent and the Duke of York followed in their father's footsteps, and the Duke of Clarence alone sided with the Irish.

Reactionary as was the opposition to emancipation, narrow-minded and bigoted as it now seems to us, a certain justification for the course taken about it by the Royal Family of the day exists in the fact that it was on the question of religion that the Stuarts had been ousted, and stubborn, honest George III felt that, as champion of the Protestant cause in Europe, it would be not only impolitic, but positively unrighteous, to abate an iota of his position. This was the spirit that lost him America, but it remained with him till the end.

Meanwhile the condition of Ireland was not reassuring. In 1823 the situation seemed specially hopeless. The Ribandmen and Orangemen caused continual disturbances, respectable Ulstermen were leaving Ireland, and, according to the *Times*, the province of Munster was given up to the "filth, ferocity, and lawlessness of the genuine Munster savage," while Monaghan was "rapidly

going back to a dark and benighted state—to an age of barbarian ignorance.”¹

Three weeks later the same newspaper was even more pessimistic. “There is clearly nothing,” it says, “on which the welfare of the nation so much depends as upon the pacification of Ireland. Probably neither ancient nor modern times present an instance of a country so governed for the space of thirty years as to become every year more and more turbulent in itself—every year less likely to subside into peace and constitutional obedience.”

In 1829, the year before William IV came to the throne, the Bill for Catholic Emancipation was passed, but peace did not ensue for distracted Ireland.

Queen Adelaide probably agreed with William IV in wishing to abolish Catholic disabilities; her influence, indeed, may have been the cause of his separating himself from the rest of the Royal Family, and favouring the idea from the first. The rulers of Saxe-Meiningen were very liberal in religious matters, and therefore concessions in that direction did not terrify her as did any measure which would, she feared, admit the people to a share in the government of the country. It is only just to her to allow that many wiser heads than hers thought a revolution was imminent.

The newspapers were certainly not reassuring

¹ *Times*, April 1st, 1823.

on the subject. Even the *Times* had not learnt the dignified reticence which was later to become its most noticeable characteristic, and was alarmingly blunt in the statement of its opinions. Insinuations that George IV's emissaries tampered with the post to Brighton, and the comment, "The violation of private correspondence was a characteristic of the most corrupt period of the French Monarchy when tottering to its fall," sound extraordinary to our ears, and were doubtless most alarming to the timid little German Princess fresh from a land where references to Royalty were always couched in terms of compliment.

Loyalty and religion often walk hand in hand, and certainly when Queen Adelaide came to England, little religion existed among the upper classes, and even its observances were seldom considered. The following description from the *Penny Magazine* of Hyde Park on a Sunday afternoon will astonish those who imagine that Sunday has always been strictly observed in England. "Dukes, merchants, barristers, and bankers are all intermingled; Parliament men on horseback—for Sunday is a *dies non* in the Senate—bow to ladies whose figures and complexion make Frenchmen and Prussians talk with rapture of the beauties of England; tall footmen shining in scarlet and lace exchange knowing looks with smart diminutive tigers in frock-coats and

top-boots, who cling behind bachelor-looking cabriolets. By-and-by an occasional carriage may be seen to break out of the circle, and disappear by one of the gates—for the hour of dinner draws nigh. At six o'clock there is a visible declension in the numbers; and after that time the bustle dies rapidly away."

We shall not be able to picture the scene to ourselves unless we realise the costume of these elegant people. As to the ladies, "the bonnet stretching over the *manches à gigot* like a vast umbrella—the waist compressed into stays that sever the fair one's body into two portions wasp-like—the mountains of ribbon at top, and the acres of flounces below—these were the decorations that made the prettiest Englishwoman as hideous as a Hottentot Venus. The gentleman, on whose arm hangs the expansive lady, is reduced to the smallest possible dimensions by his own stays, over which the closely fitting coat is buttoned with the utmost exertion of the valet's strength—nothing loose about him but the enormous shirt frill, which flutters on the breeze, despite the massive brooch. How these creatures move is not easy to comprehend. When the surtout was slowly superseding the swallow-tailed coat, it was equally close-fitting over the compressed ribs; but the exquisite sometimes condescended to veil his beautiful proportions in a vast cloak with a gorgeous fur cape, somewhat out of harmony with his tiny

hat, but quite in keeping with his iron-heeled boot which clanked on the pavement like the obsolete patten. These were the days when whiskers came in—timid precursors of the ample beard.”¹

In spite of its gay surface, it was a hard, coarse age. “It is reckoned very disgraceful in Russia for the higher orders to be drunk,”² says Creevey with evident astonishment. Suicides among public men were of frequent occurrence. Probably, as Sir Herbert Maxwell remarks, physical causes were partly answerable for the despair and disgust which seemed to hang like a cloud over the lives of many the world deemed fortunate. When a man after drinking heavily fell into the hands of the doctor, he was bled mercilessly, whatever his disease might be. Sanitary arrangements were in their infancy. Open drains ran through the streets, and typhus and cholera made frequent visitations to the poorer quarters of the cities.

Owing in all probability to a combination of these circumstances, people aged much more quickly than they do now. In the memoirs and letters of the period we read satirical descriptions of old ladies who insist on going into society, and who appear to have been older than anyone now is, and when Creevey tells us³

¹ C. Knight, *Passages of a Working Life*, vol. ii. p. 7.

² *Creevey Papers*, vol. i. p. 197.

³ *Ibid.* vol. ii. p. 251.

that Lord Grey's appearance has been altered by the loss of an upper tooth, we realise the reason for the youthful aspect the world has assumed. Appliances to make the old seem young did not exist in those days.

In one way, indeed, we seem to be returning in some degree to the habits of our forefathers of a hundred years ago. We read of their pleasure in coaching, of the delight of being on the box seat of a fast coach such as the Dart, the Defiance, or the Express on a fine morning, of galloping through the villages, stopping at an inn for a meal in the middle of the day, enjoying a cigar, and arriving at one's destination in the cool of the evening after a delightful and invigorating day. Motors seem to be bringing back the charm of actual travelling, of seeing the country, and moving from place to place—a charm which is lost to the man who sits in a train with the sole object of getting as quickly as possible from one point to another.

Ten years after the first arrival of the Princess Adelaide in England, the lively Creevey wrote: "To-day we have had a lark of a very high order. Lady Wilton sent over yesterday from Knowsley to say that the Loco Motive machine was to be upon the railway at such a place at twelve o'clock for the Knowsley party to ride in if they liked, and inviting this house to be of the party. So of course we were at our post in

three carriages and some horsemen at the hour appointed. I had the satisfaction, for I can't call it pleasure, of taking a trip of five miles in it, which we did in just a quarter of an hour. . . . But observe during these five miles, the machine was occasionally made to put itself out or go it ; and then we went at the rate of twenty-three miles an hour, and just with the same ease as to motion or absence of friction as the other reduced pace. But the quickest motion is to me frightful : it is really flying, and it is impossible to divest yourself of the notion of instant death to all upon the least accident happening. It gave me a headache which has not yet left me. . . . Altogether I am extremely glad indeed to have seen this miracle, and to have travelled in it. Had I thought worse of it than I do, I should have had the curiosity to try it ; but having done so, I am quite satisfied with my first achievement being my last." ¹

The English are not an artistic nation, and certainly at the time we are considering art was at a particularly low ebb. The structures destined for habitation by the Royal Family were hideous. Buckingham Palace, George IV's Cottage in Windsor Park with its huge thatched roof, the Pavilion at Brighton, were all tasteless, ugly, and expensive. Georgian art had died out, and nothing worthy had taken its place. Domestic art was practically non-existent, and what is

¹ *Creevey Papers*, vol. ii. p. 203.

known as Early Victorian, with its hugely flowered carpets and hideous aniline dyes, reigned supreme in the ordinary house.

That what has been called the ornamental fringe of life was practically non-existent is shown, I think, by the insertion of a letter containing the following passage in the *Times*, at a time when, it must be noted, the *Times* was a small paper, and did not insert many letters. The erection was contemplated of a new building to hold the treasures belonging to the British Museum, then housed in Montague House, and an indignant gentleman wrote: "At the instant when the fundholder is boldly told by some of the 'lives and fortune men' that he ought to sustain the loss of part of his dividends, is he to be consoled by knowing that money is wanting, amongst other objects, for the erection of a palace, not for his monarch, but for the kidnapped statues of Athens and of Thebes?"¹

The Philistine who penned those words would not in our day have had the opportunity of rushing into print.

¹ *Times*, February 26th, 1822.

CHAPTER VI

Clarence House and Bushey Park—Death of the Duke of Kent—The Princess Victoria—Death of George III, and of the Duchess of York—Queen Caroline's arrival in England—Marriage of Elizabeth FitzClarence—Birth and death of the Princess Elizabeth—The Duchess of Clarence's letters to Princess Victoria—The Duke of Clarence tries to retrench—The Duke and Duchess go to the Continent, visit Antwerp, Mayence, Frankfort, Saxe-Meiningen—Stay with the Queen of Würtemberg—They return to England—Second visit to the Continent, Bruges, Ghent, Aix-la-Chapelle to Meiningen—Marriage of the Duke of Saxe-Meiningen—Life at Saxe-Meiningen

THE Duke and Duchess of Clarence were now settled in England, and divided their time between Clarence House and Bushey Park.

Their life was outwardly quiet, but many events were taking place in the Royal Family. On Sunday, January 23rd, 1820, the Duke of Kent died. His death was quite unexpected, for he had never been ill before, "and now to die of a cold when half the kingdom had coids with impunity, is very bad luck indeed. It reminds me of Æsop's fable of the Oak and the Reed," is Mr. Croker's comment.¹

The Duchess of Kent watched by her husband's bedside with the utmost assiduity, never

¹ *Croker Correspondence and Diaries*, vol. i. p. 155.

taking off her clothes for five days and nights, and when the end came her grief was overwhelming. In those early days a warm friendship subsisted between her and the Duchess of Clarence, and the latter, who had already known sorrow herself, visited her sister-in-law every day, and wept herself at the first interview, so touched was she at the widow's grief.

Princess Augusta wrote on February 4th: "She" (the Duchess of Kent) "has written to me once; and I received the letter from her, and one from Adelaide, written together from Kensington. Dearest William is so good-hearted that he has desired Adelaide to go to Kensington every day, as she is a comfort to the poor Widow; and her sweet gentle mind is of great use to the Dutchess of Kent. It is a great delight to me to think that they can read the same Prayers, and talk the same Mother tongue together; it makes them such real friends and comforts to each other."¹

The visits exchanged between the two Duchesses were quite unceremonious. They did not wait to be announced, but the visitor hunted through the different rooms till she found her hostess.

The little Princess Victoria was now her mother's only comfort, and it speaks much for the amiability of the Duchess of Clarence that, instead of looking on her niece with jealousy, she

¹ *Harcourt Papers*, vol. vi.

was very fond of her. She spoke to a friend with evident pleasure of the child's health and spirits, and said that she was much touched to see that when the Baby was brought in to see her, she held her two little hands over a miniature of the Duke of Kent hanging round her neck, and laughed as though delighted. When the Duke of Clarence entered wearing his Orders, the little girl cried out in rapture, Papa ! Papa !¹

George III only outlived his son a very few days, dying on January 29th, 1820. The Duke of York, who took charge of him—at high cost to the nation—was evidently fond of his father, whose favourite son he was. The Duchess of Clarence, who seems to have had an agreeable talent for representing her relations in an amiable light, notes with pleasure his emotion when he told her how the old King recovered his senses at the last, and thanked his attendants for lifting him up and for sponging his mouth, saying gratefully, "I thank you; it does me good."

Death was busy among the Royal Family in the year 1820. In August the Duchess of York, daughter of the late King of Prussia, passed away after a short illness. She appears to have been a lady of eccentric habits, for she did not rise till the evening and turned night into day. She was, however, extremely benevolent, and

¹ *Jerningham Letters*, vol. ii. p. 160.

was much regretted by the poor round her country home at Oatlands. No such special intimacy seems to have existed between her and the Duchess of Clarence as between the latter and the Duchess of Kent, who, it is easy to see, had much in common with each other.

Meanwhile, George IV had begun his reign with an illness so serious that he seemed unlikely to recover, and when he did a terrible ordeal awaited him. For, attended with praise from Canning, and with flowery panegyrics from the *Times*, his hated spouse started on her journey to England. Unworthy husband and monarch though he was, at this juncture George IV deserves pity, for the ensuing months must have been to him a long-drawn agony. Brougham, Queen Caroline's legal adviser, hurried to Dover to meet her, and the King retired to the huge thatched cottage in Windsor Park, the building of which had cost as much as many a palace. The scandal of Queen Caroline's presence in England was considerable, and the case brought against her by her husband was reported fully in the papers, who spared the public no possible detail dealing with the question of her relations with Bergami, and raised horrified interest to a point of the utmost excitement.

The Duchess of Clarence, who was now leading a very retired life in the hope of this time bearing an heir to the throne of England, must have shuddered at the terrible scandals by which she



EDWARD AUGUSTUS, DUKE OF KENT.

From a portrait by Sir William Beechey, R.A., in the National Portrait Gallery.

was surrounded. Never before had any Royal Family dragged itself so deeply in the mire, or flaunted its family skeletons so thoroughly before the eyes of all Europe as had this one. The Bill to deprive Queen Caroline of the title and rights of Queen Consort and to dissolve the marriage between her and George IV was brought forward by Lord Liverpool on July 5th, and the trial dragged out its lengthy and unsavoury course till November. Then it was withdrawn, and the state of the public mind was well expressed by the following rhyme :

Most Gracious Queen, we thee implore
To go away and sin no more ;
But, if that effort be too great,
To go away, at any rate.

A more pleasing family event—though even this had its seamy side—was the first wedding in the FitzClarence family, that of Elizabeth FitzClarence, William's third daughter by Mrs. Jordan, to the Earl of Erroll. This took place on December 4th, 1820, in St. George's, Hanover Square. The Duchess of Clarence and her ladies were present at the wedding, and after the ceremony a breakfast for twenty-eight people was given at St. James's Palace. Princess Sophia came to this function, which the Duke of York had also promised to attend, but he sent an excuse at the last moment. The bride's dress had been presented to her by the Princesses

Sophia and Augusta, and the Queen of Würtemberg had sent a magnificent present.

The kindness shown by the Royal Family to the FitzClarence family is very noticeable, and proves that the Duke of Clarence was popular with his brothers and sisters. He, George IV, and the Duke of York seem always to have felt warm affection for each other.

A few days later Dr. Halliday was called up in the night to attend the Duchess of Clarence, who had been seized with sudden indisposition. Next morning Sir Henry Halford and Sir William Knighton followed at his summons, and much anxiety was felt by the Royal Family. The King sent inquiries every day, the Duke of Clarence was most attentive—as indeed it behoved him to be—all knockers were muffled, and straw was laid down. At last, at half-past five in the afternoon of December 10th, 1820, six weeks earlier than her accouchement was expected, the Duchess of Clarence was delivered of a female child.

“Her Royal Highness is as well as can be expected. The infant is born before its time about six weeks,” was the medical bulletin signed by Henry Halford, William Knighton, and Andrew Halliday.

The Duke of York, the Lord Chancellor, and Canning were present at the birth, and George IV sent a message to say that the child was to be named Elizabeth. The future Queen was to

have a good old English name. Victoria did not please the bulk of the English people, as was shown by one member of Parliament who alluded impatiently in the House to the Princess with a hard name, Vittoria, or Victorine, not knowing how glorious the name Victoria would become in the annals of England.

The child "is to be a future Queen Elizabeth—but, I trust, not so sanguinary,"¹ wrote the Roman Catholic Lady Jerningham, to her daughter Lady Bedingfield.

However, it was only for a few months—months no doubt the happiest in the Duchess of Clarence's life—that the little Elizabeth was destined to come between her cousin and the Crown.

At first the baby seemed likely to do well, she "took the breast" with a vigour unusual in prematurely born infants, and appeared to be gaining strength. The Duchess of Clarence was, however, very ill, and it was not till the end of January that she was strong enough to drive in the Park. She then resumed the quiet routine of her life, and constant meetings took place between her and her principal friends, the Duchess of Kent and the Princess Sophia.

The winter was mild, but at the beginning of March the weather became suddenly cold, and the infant Princess had an attack of feverishness. The three physicians were at once summoned.

¹ *Jerningham Letters*, vol. ii, p. 187.

Sir Andrew Halliday was in constant attendance, and did not even go to bed, while Sir Henry Halford and Sir William Knighton spent the whole of Friday—the day the child was taken ill—as well as Saturday at the Palace. However, on Saturday night convulsions came on, and the little Princess died at one o'clock on the morning of Sunday, March 4th, 1821, being only four months old. When the Duchess of Clarence was called in to see the dying infant, she fainted in the Duke's arms.

The death of the little Elizabeth was the tragedy of her life, for though there were occasional rumours that she was again likely to become a mother, and she spent much time visiting German baths in the hope of fortifying her health and becoming strong enough to bear a child, she never had another.

The next day the Duke of York called to offer condolences, and the Duchess of Gloucester with the Princess Sophia stayed two or three hours with the Duchess of Clarence, doing their best to comfort her. The Duchess of Kent did not apparently come to see her sister-in-law at once, possibly judging that the sight of one who certainly gained by her loss might be trying to the afflicted mother. St. James's Palace was thronged for the next few days by people calling to offer condolences.

The funeral must have been rather a desolate affair. It was not attended by any of the Royal

Family, but on March 10th two coaches, each drawn by six horses, drove up to St. James's Palace. In the first of these was placed the coffin containing the embalmed body of the infant. Two gentlemen of the household of the Duke of Clarence followed in the second coach, and, escorted by a company of the 10th Hussars, the small cavalcade made its way to Windsor, where the body was buried in the Royal vault.

One consolation was granted to the Duchess of Clarence. Her much-loved sister Ida, Duchess of Saxe-Weimar, with her children, the invalid Princess Louise and Prince William, came to visit her in the time of her trouble.

The children are mentioned in the following letter written by the Duchess of Clarence to her two-year-old niece the Princess Victoria, not much more than two months after the death of her own baby.

MY DEAR LITTLE HEART,

I hope you are well and don't forget Aunt Adelaide, who loves you so fondly. Loulou and Wilhelm desire their love to you, and Uncle William also.

God bless and preserve you is the constant prayer of your most truly affectionate Aunt,

ADELAIDE.¹

Certainly the woman who penned that letter

¹ *Letters of Queen Victoria*, vol. i. p. 40. Edited by A. C. Benson and Lord Esher.

in her time of bitter disappointment to the child who profited by her baby's death must have had something great in her nature, though her contemporaries saw in her nothing but a plain, homely person whose conversation was not particularly interesting.

The Duchess of Clarence's love for children was very great. She was always most anxious about the welfare of her niece the invalid Princess Louise, and she seems throughout her life to have felt a warm attachment for the Princess Victoria. This attachment was thoroughly reciprocated; in fact, the impression left on the reader is that the future Queen of England felt in reality more affection for her "Aunt Adelaide" than for her mother.

Another letter from the Duchess of Clarence to this much-loved niece, written a year later, may be cited here:

May 24th, 1822.

"Uncle William and Aunt Adelaide send their love to *dear little Victoria* with their best wishes on her birthday, and hope that she will now become a *very good Girl*, being now *three years* old. Uncle William and Aunt Adelaide also beg little Victoria to give dear Mamma and dear Sissi [Princess Feodore, Princess Victoria's half-sister] a kiss in their name, and to Aunt Augusta [the Duchess of Cambridge], Aunt Mary [the Duchess of Gloucester], and Aunt Sophia too, and also

to the *big Doll*. Uncle William and Aunt Adelaide are very sorry to be absent on that day and not to see their *dear, dear* little Victoria, as they are sure she will be very good and obedient to dear Mamma on that day, and on many, many others. They also hope that dear little Victoria will not forget them and know them again when Uncle and Aunt return.

“To dear little Xandrina Victoria.”

This letter was written when the Duke and Duchess of Clarence were on their way to the Continent, where it was hoped that the Duchess would recover her health, and that the Duke would be able to diminish his expenditure. With the want of dignity eminently his characteristic he had applied to Parliament for the £6,000 he had refused with indignation when it was offered him in the year 1818. He now asked, not only for this, but also for the arrears of income from the time of his marriage. He had been put to great expense, he said, by being obliged to return from the Continent sooner than he had expected. After debates on the subject which would have been extremely trying to anyone of a sensitive nature, he obtained all he asked for, and in addition a condescending certificate of merit from Tierney to the effect that everyone concurred in giving his Royal Highness credit for his conduct since his marriage. One of the members of what was contemptuously

termed the "College of Princes" had put himself in the unusual position of gaining a prize for good conduct.

The only other event of importance in the annals of the Royal Family about this time was the death of the unfortunate Queen Caroline, "the greatest, perhaps the best woman of her day," said the *Times* with an enthusiasm which did more credit to its heart—or perhaps to its party spirit—than to its intelligence.

On June 30th, 1822, the Duke and Duchess of Clarence left England for the Continent. They travelled incognito, as the Earl and Countess of Munster, and made the journey from Walmer to Flushing on board the *Royal Sovereign* yacht. They were accompanied by a young physician named Dr. Beattie, who wrote two volumes about the journeys he took with his Royal patients. The sight of these volumes inspires the reader with the hope that he will see the Duke and Duchess of Clarence at close quarters. This hope is sadly belied, as the writer, in his courtier-like anxiety to reveal nothing displeasing to Royalty, devotes page after page to flowery verbiage, but tells very little that is really interesting.

We learn, however, from his pages that the voyage across the Channel was rough, and that the two Admirals on board felt some anxiety about the ship's course. However, with the morning the sea became calm. "The ladies

have now appeared on deck," remarks the polite doctor. "All have suffered the usual penalty of a night at sea; but the Duchess, we rejoice to learn, less than any of her attendants."

Breakfast was served on deck, and the Duke of Clarence busied himself in pointing out the different places as the ship passed by them. The pilot who navigated the ship up the Scheldt had served on board a French man-of-war during the late naval wars, and much patriotic satisfaction as well as amusement were roused among the midshipmen when, in reply to a question put by the Duke of Clarence as to what the French ship did during the war, he answered, "Vat shee do? Vy shee run away like de Duyvel!"¹

At three o'clock in the afternoon the yacht came to anchor off the town of Antwerp in front of the esplanade built by Napoleon. A crowd of spectators had assembled on the pier, for a Royal yacht was a rare visitor. However, the Royal party did not disembark till six o'clock, being provided at four o'clock with what the doctor calls a "collation," which was served in the state cabin. They apparently went straight from the boat to the Hôtel Grand Laboureur, where a sumptuous dinner awaited them.

The next day the Duke and Duchess did a little sightseeing. They visited the Cathedral,

¹ *Beattie's Journal of a Residence in Germany*, from which the other extracts about the Duke and Duchess's journey are taken.

where they admired the Descent from the Cross. They also saw the house which had been prepared for Napoleon, and which he had refused to occupy when he found that it was constructed over a canal, which might, he said, be used by his enemies as a mine to blow him up.

The day after this the Royal party drove to the villa of the Duchess's brother-in-law the Duke of Saxe-Weimar, situated a few miles to the west of Ghent. Thence, accompanied by his host, the Duke of Clarence inspected the battle-field of Oudenarde, where "the victorious steps of Marlborough still imprint the soil." The Royal party then travelled south through Brussels to Aix-la-Chapelle, which was their starting-point for a journey along the Rhine—a journey which furnishes the worthy doctor with many admirable if prosy reflections. At Andernach the Royal party were met by the Prince Maximilian of Nieuwied. He conducted them over his Castle and his private museum, and showed them a collection of embossed and embroidered toilette ornaments designed by Moravian artists. Some of these were bought by the Duke and Duchess of Clarence.

This at least is what the attentive reader gathers from the worthy physician's narrative, though his extreme delicacy makes him occasionally difficult to follow. A quotation, however, will enable anyone to form a judgment himself on this important point. "They" (the

toilette ornaments) “excited great admiration in that quarter where works of taste, or merit, never fail to secure patronage and encouragement. . . .” A digression follows, but we finish with the satisfactory assurance, “For the encouragement of the artists, as well as for personal gratification, a quantity of these articles were purchased, and will form pleasing souvenirs of Nieuwied on more than one Royal toilette in England.”

The Duke appears to have been a most energetic sightseer. At Mayence he spent a couple of hours in the Cathedral, and subsequently had sufficient energy to follow a German military band round the town for upwards of an hour. His powers of walking were indeed so great that he tired out anyone with whom chance brought him into contact. The Duchess was not so active, though we find occasional mention of walks she took with her husband. Her charming manners, and the smile with which she received any deputation who approached her, made a deep impression on her medical attendant.

At Frankfort the Duke and Duchess were received by the Landgrave and Landgravine of Hesse-Homburg and the Landgrave of Hesse, and were entertained with a sumptuous banquet.

This was a family party, for the Landgravine of Hesse-Homburg was, as we know, sister to the Duke of Clarence, and had been married only

a few months before him. The Landgravine's active benevolence had made her greatly beloved in her adopted country, where she had settled down to her duties with a good sense and adaptability which were worthy of the utmost praise.

In 1906 the German Emperor, when unveiling a monument to the Counts of Hesse-Homburg, now no longer in existence, said of her: "She was a real mother to this country, and worked and cared for her adopted fatherland. The Homburgers to this day think of her with real thankfulness and reverence." ¹

The Landgravine became one of the Duchess of Clarence's most intimate friends, their active benevolence making them congenial spirits.

The next halting-place was close to the Saxe-Meiningen frontier, and here the Royal party were met by the Duchess of Clarence's brother, the Duke of Saxe-Meiningen, a tall, handsome young man who escorted the party with detachments of Hussars from the frontier to Altenstein. The Duke was a fine rider, and his stable contained about fifty horses. We are informed that in his droschka he drove silver-greys, and in his coach bright bays sixteen hands high. He had spent much time in England and resembled an Englishman in many of his habits, which, to the doctor at least, was a recommendation.

Saxe-Meiningen, as described by Dr. Beattie, gives somewhat the impression of a picturesque

¹ *Life of the Empress Frederick.*

German State as seen in opera-bouffe. He seems, however, to have been genuinely impressed by the prosperity of the country, and the thriving appearance of the peasants, which was, we may opine, strikingly different from the condition of the same class in England. The men working in the fields were clad in three-cornered military hats, buckskin breeches, and shoe-buckles of the last century, while the bright-eyed girls wore "close jerkins, long queues, helmet caps, hoops, and streamers of black ribbon." The government was paternal, and the people peeped in at the windows of the Royal villa at Altenstein and lounged at their ease in the Royal hall. The Court liveries were, the doctor noted, green and gold, and the music of the private military band was finer than anything he had ever heard.

It is true that this account of her native land would certainly be read by Queen Adelaide, as the Duchess of Clarence had become by the time it was published, and that Dr. Beattie was nothing if not a courtier. Even, however, if we discount something for this, we receive a pleasant impression of the little State.

The country round Liebenstein, the next halting-place, where the much-loved Dowager Duchess had an Italian villa, was evidently very pretty, the river Werra winding through rocky and wooded scenery, though Dr. Beattie speaks disrespectfully of the "interminable" Thuringian forest.

The Duchess of Clarence remained at the Italian villa with her mother, while the Duke made a three days' excursion to see his eldest sister, the Queen of Würtemberg, who had now been married for thirty years. He returned in time to be present at the fête held in honour of the Dowager Duchess's birthday. The grotto of Glücksbrunn, the greatest curiosity in Saxony, was on this important occasion lit with thousands of flambeaux, and the Royal band, distributed in different parts of the grotto, played Bohemian airs. The Dowager Duchess was led in to dinner by the Duke of Clarence, and the reigning Duke followed with the Duchess of Clarence.

The villa was decorated with garlands, and after dinner, speeches were made and toasts drunk. In the evening a performance was given in the theatre. This began with *Der Freischutz*, and continued with more speeches, followed by the performance of a play called *The Battle of Vittoria*. The doctor was by this time evidently rather tired, as he remarks with a candour unusual to him: "The heat during the engagement was excessive, and afforded a tolerable idea in that particular of what the original might have been." The performance was over at nine o'clock, but much remained to do before the Royal party and their attendants were allowed to retire to rest.

The spectators poured out of the theatre to

find the gardens and the surrounding landscape brilliantly illuminated, the cipher L, in honour of Louisa, the Dowager Duchess, being everywhere conspicuous. A ball followed, at which the waltz was danced, and Dr. Beattie, who had hitherto, he allowed, felt an illiberal prejudice against it, decided that the waltz "is the most intellectual of all dances, and most becoming a refined and sentimental people."

On September 1st the Royal party left the dominion of Saxe-Meiningen, the Duchess of Clarence having spent over a month with her family in her native air. The Duke of Saxe-Meiningen accompanied the party on their homeward journey, and the weather being wet the day they left Würzburg, he was persuaded to leave the open droschka in which he drove with his aide-de-camp, and to take refuge in the landau with his sister and her husband, whom he amused with his vivacity. The destination of the Royal party was Langenburg, where they were received by the Prince of Hohenlohe-Langenburg, cousin to the Duchess of Clarence, a man of fifty-six, and by his son the good-looking Prince Ernest, who, like the Duke of Saxe-Meiningen, was an adept in the English language.

The journey was made in landaus, the one in which the Duke and Duchess of Clarence were seated being drawn by eight beautiful black Oldenburg horses. The roads were extremely

steep, the landaus heavy, and at one hill the postilion riding the leader of the last carriage seemed unable to force his horses up the incline. Under a paternal government, however, certain difficulties are simplified. The officer in attendance at once drew his sabre, and showed the boy that death would be his portion should an accident ensue. The effect of this argument was powerful, and the unfortunate horses struggled up the ascent.

At Heidelberg the Queen of Würtemberg came to meet her relations. She already knew the Duchess of Clarence, but the Duke of Saxe-Meiningen was now presented to her for the first time.

The Queen much enjoyed recalling her early reminiscences of life at Kew Palace with her brother, and her memory even of the most minute events was remarkable. On one occasion she and the Duke of Clarence were agreed as to the month and even the day on which a circumstance took place at Kew in the year 1781, but could not agree as to the hour, and this important point was at last left undecided.

One day the Queen, the Duke and Duchess of Clarence, and the Duke of Saxe-Meiningen made an excursion to Worlsbrunnen, the beauty of which filled Dr. Beattie with admiration. The scenery around Heidelberg is indeed famous, and the Duchess of Clarence was delighted with all she saw. The Queen took her relations also



GEORGE IV.

From a portrait by Sir Thomas Lawrence, P.R.A., in the National Portrait Gallery.

along the river Neckar in a barge, coming back to Heidelberg by carriage. Another day they went to see the celebrated Swerzingen gardens and the ducal palace and gardens at Mannheim, where the Duchess bought some fine engravings of Heidelberg.

This was the Duke and Duchess's last excursion from Heidelberg, and they now started on their homeward journey, travelling by Hesse-Homburg, where they stayed at the Castle, by Frankfort, where the famous fair was in progress, and by Aix-la-Chapelle. They were obliged to remain for twenty-four hours at Brussels owing to a slight accident to the carriage, and received a deputation of English residents, who presented them with a loyal address. At Ghent they spent two or three days with the Duke and Duchess of Weimar, and visited the field of Waterloo, and on September 21st, 1822, they embarked at Antwerp in the *Royal Sovereign* yacht, and returned to England.

CHAPTER VII

Visit to Ems, Frankfort, Coblenz, Cologne, Brussels and Antwerp—Stormy crossing—Another journey to the Continent—Visit to Ems and Schwalbach—Blanchard's balloon—Building of Clarence House—Death of the Duke of York—The "Lord High Admiral"—Travels and receptions at Admiralty House—Forced resignation of office—Duke of Clarence's mental instability—Death of George IV

ON their return from abroad the Duke and Duchess of Clarence continued to lead a quiet and secluded life, sometimes at Clarence House, St. James's Palace, and sometimes at Bushey Park. Occasionally they paid visits to George IV at the Pavilion at Brighton, and on one of these Lady Granville, wife of the English Ambassador at Paris, gives the following graphic sketch of the Duchess: "A very excellent, amiable, well-bred little woman, who comes in and out of the room *à ravir*, with nine new gowns (the most loyal among us not having been able to muster above six), moving *à la Lieven*, independent of her body."¹ It was rumoured that the Duchess of Clarence was again likely to become a mother, but as the years passed on these hopes faded, and the Duke and Duchess seemed of comparatively little importance.

¹ *Letters of Harriet Countess Granville*, vol. i. p. 242.

Lady Bedingfield, who had known the Duchess of Clarence before her marriage when she was visiting her sister the Duchess of Weimar, mentions a dinner at St. James's Palace which gives some idea of the domestic life led at this time by the Duke and Duchess of Clarence. Dinner was at seven o'clock, and besides Lady Bedingfield and her daughter, and a lady and gentleman-in-waiting, Colonel and Miss FitzClarence were present. Two of the younger FitzClarence daughters came in after dinner, also a German musician who played with them on the piano, and at half-past ten the party broke up.¹

It is evident that the Duke and Duchess were continually surrounded by the FitzClarence family, to whom the Duchess was extremely kind. Creevey tells us that Colonel FitzClarence, afterwards Earl of Munster, whom he preferred in every way to his brothers, remarked that the Duchess of Clarence was "the best and most charming woman in the world," and we may hope the reports that the FitzClarence family were occasionally insolent to their father's wife are not founded on fact.

Nevertheless, there must have been much that was uncongenial to the Duchess of Clarence in her surroundings, and the fact that she was forced to play the part of kindly step-mother to children born out of wedlock, whose mother

¹ *Jerningham Letters*, vol. ii. p. 159.

had been an actress of indifferent character, must have been extremely bitter to her. Though her natural amiability, her sweetness of character, and her strong sense of duty enabled her to carry out the rôle she had prescribed for herself to perfection, she must have shed many tears in secret—tears which would have been less bitter had her little daughter lived, and the Duke of Clarence possessed at least one legitimate child.

Under the circumstances visits to her own family were a great consolation to her, and fortunately the Duke of Clarence was fond of travelling, and was most anxious to carry out any plan which would strengthen his wife's health sufficiently to enable her to bear an heir to the throne.

On March 20th, 1825, the Duke and Duchess, accompanied by Colonel FitzClarence and by Augusta and Amelia (his sisters), started again for the Continent. This journey was to be of longer duration than the last, for they were to be absent from England for six months, would spend June at Ems, where they were to drink the waters, and afterwards recruit at the Queen of Würtemberg's summer residence in the Black Forest. They left England early in the year, that they might arrive in Saxe-Meiningen in time to be present at the festivities to celebrate the marriage of the Duke of Saxe-Meiningen to a princess of Hesse-Cassel.

They travelled, as they had done the year

before, in two landaus and a chariot, and the party consisted of sixteen people, including Dr. Beattie.

This year the voyage was to be from Woolwich to Ostend, and was to be made in a "Government steam vessel," the *Royal Comet*. The Royal party started at eleven o'clock at night, and expected to arrive at Ostend at two o'clock on the following afternoon. However, the wind being fresh, very little way was made, and after a consultation off the Nore, it was decided that the route should be changed, and the party disembarked at Calais.

The Duchess of Clarence was evidently already suffering from the malady which was to make the latter part of her life a suffering one. She complained of a pain in her side, and had a slight cough, but her optimistic doctor hoped that a course of Ems waters and the rest and fine air afterwards would completely restore her health. She was, as usual, very agreeable and full of talk, and when Italian painters, poets, and historians were the subjects of conversation, she showed, according to the doctor, a thorough knowledge of these subjects.

The party travelled from Bruges to Ghent, and thence through Aix-la-Chapelle and Mayence to Frankfort-on-the-Maine. Here the Landgrave and Landgravine of Homburg came to meet them, and they all dined together. The Duke of Saxe-Meiningen had been married on the

23rd of the month, and was spending his honeymoon at Liebenstein, but the Duke and Duchess of Clarence were to be among the assemblage to welcome the bride on her first arrival at Saxe-Meiningen.

Great preparations had been made for the reception of the new Duchess. Triumphal arches were erected along the fifteen miles from Liebenstein to the town of Meiningen, bands were stationed along the route, and the town was illuminated. The bride and bridegroom arrived in an open landau, received a loyal address on behalf of the Jewish community, who had erected a handsome triumphal arch in their honour at the entrance to the town, and proceeded slowly along the streets to an accompaniment of bands, salvos, church bells, songs, and speeches. At the entrance to the Castle the new Duchess was met by the Dowager Duchess and the Duchess of Clarence, and by them she was conducted to her rooms. The illuminations in the evening were magnificent, and the city was crowded. The Duke and Duchess of Saxe-Meiningen, accompanied by the Duke and Duchess of Clarence, again drove out in an open landau, and were received with acclamations.

The Duchess may well have contrasted the love and loyalty shown for the Dukes of Meiningen with the indifference and even dislike felt by the English people for their Royal Family, especially for the selfish, lazy George IV, who spent his

time shut up with Lady Conyngham in the monster cottage in Windsor Park, or the hideous rococo Pavilion at Brighton.

It may perhaps not be out of place to record that the day after the Royal entry into the town of Meiningen, the Dowager Duchess honoured Dr. Beattie by an invitation to dine. The repast was at half-past one, and was, according to the guest, in good English taste, roast beef, fried potatoes, and an excellent rice pudding making up the menu. The following day Dr. Beattie received a special invitation to dine at the Palace at half-past two, and sat opposite the Duchess of Saxe-Meiningen, whom he describes as very fair, with blue eyes, an elegant figure, and charming manners. The menu on this occasion is not recorded.

During this time the Duchess of Clarence evidently spent most of her time with the Dowager Duchess, who was doubtless very glad of her company on an occasion which must, after all, have had its thorny side for her. It was a time of mourning, too, for her only brother, the Prince of Hohenlohe-Langenburg, with whom the Clarences had stayed on their last visit to the Continent, died of apoplexy the day of the wedding rejoicings at Meiningen.

A few days later the Duchess of Clarence had the pleasure of meeting her dearly loved sister the Duchess Ida. She came alone, as the Duke of Saxe-Weimar had gone to America, and the

children were ailing and could not travel. Dr. Beattie comments on the extreme happiness of the Duchess of Clarence when surrounded by her family. The presence of her husband's children must, however, have constantly reminded her of the seamy side of her position. The two Miss FitzClarences caught cold at the ball given in honour of the Duke of Saxe-Meiningen's marriage, and Amelia, the younger sister, became seriously ill. Four or five times daily did her affectionate father make his way from the Castle to her lodgings, to suggest something to amuse her and to distract her mind from her illness.

The visit to Saxe-Meiningen was now drawing to a close; and before the end of May the English Royal party started for Ems, where they arrived at the Château-à-quatre-Tours on June 1st. Life at Ems was regular. The visitors rose early, went to the Baths, rested, drank the waters, and took exercise, in a regular routine. The Duke of Clarence often walked for four hours in the day. An aide-de-camp who arrived with congratulations from the King of Prussia and was taken by the Duke for one of his daily constitutionals, said that, not being accustomed to exercise, he felt ready to drop with fatigue. The Duchess occasionally accompanied her husband, but only on his shorter rambles.

Once the monotony of the proceedings was varied by a party given by the Duke and Duchess

of Clarence in the garden in front of the château where they lodged. The Duchess of Clarence sat to receive her guests on a little rise in the grounds, which was surrounded by roses and laburnum. She greeted everyone with the gracious kindness natural to her.

A less agreeable interruption to the routine was caused by the Duke of Clarence being seized with asthma. He was subject to this malady, and this attack was less severe than usual, an amelioration which the doctor ascribed to the air, and the treatment of Ems, though the Duke politely attributed it to the skill of his medical attendant.

From Ems the Duke of Clarence went again to visit the Queen of Würtemberg in her summer home in the Black Forest, the Duchess meanwhile remaining with her family in Altenstein.

The Duke returned in time to celebrate his spouse's birthday on August 13th. Eighteen princes and princesses assembled for the banquet given in honour of the occasion, which was kept as a general holiday. The Duchess of Clarence's health was drunk in champagne. The company then rose, carriages awaited them at the door, and a deputation of village girls hung the Duchess's neck and shoulders with garlands, an attention to which she responded with a smile and a few graceful words. In the evening a play was performed, and when the company left the theatre the whole grove was suddenly illuminated

by festoons of lamps of different colours, while in the evening a ball was given in honour of the Duchess, at which there was a striking show of Saxon beauty.

These festivities over, the Royal party left Meiningen, and made their way to Frankfort, where they met the Queen of Würtemberg and the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, the last-named having been a princess of Hesse-Cassel. The great fair was beginning, and the town was in a bustle and set out with booths. It was after this meeting with the Duchess of Clarence and two visits from the Duke, that the Dowager Queen of Würtemberg wrote :¹ “ I am charmed with the Dutchess, who is a most amiable woman, and whose only object is to contribute to my dear Brother’s happiness. Her conduct towards the Miss FitzClarences does her the greatest credit, and I must say that both Augusta and Amelia are not only very handsome Girls, but very pleasing, sensible, and modest. I was also much pleased with Colonel George FitzClarence ; and felt quite unhappy at his not being a legitimate child.”

The next halt was at Coblentz, where the King of Prussia held a grand military review, the Grand Duke Constantine, the Grand Duke of Baden, and the Duke of Cambridge being present. This was quite a family reunion ; indeed, in the midst of much that is unsatisfactory in the lives

¹ *Harcourt Papers*, vol. vi. Letter of October 31st, 1825.

of the Duke of Clarence and his brothers and sisters, the affection which subsisted between them is a noteworthy and pleasant fact. Another point which redounds to the credit of the Sailor King is the fondness he felt for his wife and the consideration he invariably showed for her. Their marriage did not begin under auspicious circumstances, but there is no doubt that the Duke soon became very much attached to his young wife, and her influence over him was certainly very strong. Two years after his marriage someone wrote: "You would be surprised at the Duke of Clarence if you were to see him; for his wife, it is said, has entirely reformed him; and instead of the polisson manner for which he used to be celebrated, he is now quiet and well-behaved, like anybody else. . . ."

After some difficulties on the way, owing to the King of Prussia having taken possession of all the available horses for his Review, the party arrived at Cologne, whence they proceeded by Brussels to Antwerp. Here a great fête was given on board the Royal yacht, and the Duke and Duchess of Clarence entertained the King and Queen of the Netherlands, the King of Prussia, the Prince and Princess of Orange, the Duke of Cumberland, and Prince Frederick of the Netherlands; and about a hundred people dined on board.

The Royal yacht now embarked from Flushing

in the company of the *Comet* steamer. The night was calm, but the weatherwise pilot did not like the look of the moon, and a little black cloud, which appeared to the landsmen "very like a whale," excited his apprehension. He was right, for two hours after the vessel left the Scheldt a tremendous hurricane arose. The *Comet* steamer now took the Royal yacht in tow, and Sir Harry Blackwood, who was in command of the steamer, was requested to board the yacht for consultation. It was a work of danger, and when he returned his boat was crushed in by the force of the waves. It was now thought necessary that the two ships should separate, and the Royal yacht bore away to Yarmouth Sands Roads, while the *Comet* made her way to the nearest Kent port.

The *Comet* lost her remaining boat and missed her way in the storm, eventually arriving at Ramsgate with her engineer, who was absolutely exhausted by the stress and strain. The Duke of Clarence admitted that he had feared she would never weather the tempest. Meanwhile, the Royal yacht made her way to Yarmouth, arriving there on the morning of September 20th, whence the Duke and Duchess took post to London.

These hardships did not, however, long deter the Duke and Duchess of Clarence from travelling, for on May 21st, 1826, they started in the yacht *Royal Sovereign* on what proved to be their last



FREDERICK AUGUSTUS, DUKE OF YORK AND ALBANY.
After John Jackson, R.A., in the National Portrait Gallery.

journey together. They were accompanied by Colonel FitzClarence, afterwards Earl of Munster, by Mrs. Fox, who, before her marriage in 1824 to General Fox, Lord Holland's son, had been Mary FitzClarence, and by Amelia, William's youngest and only unmarried daughter. From Calais they made their way by St. Omer's, Lille, and Aix-la-Chapelle to Coblentz, where the Duke and Duchess were received at the door of the Maas Hotel by a guard of honour. Their objective was Ems, where they settled down to their usual routine of taking the waters, walking, and resting.

When the course was finished, the Royal party made their way to Schwalbach, and then to Altenstein, where they entertained the Duke of Weimar, the Prince of Barchfeldt, and Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg at dinner. As usual, the Duchess of Clarence was left with her relations in Saxe-Meiningen, while the Duke visited his sister, the Queen of Würtemberg.

After a tour, which was, according to our worthy informant, diversified by many extraordinary incidents, the Duke returned to the Duchess at Altenstein in September, and they went to pay the Landgrave of Hesse-Rothembourg a visit. They proceeded homeward by Frankfort, Namur, and Brussels, spending some time examining Quatre-Bras, Belle Alliance, and Waterloo. The Duke of Clarence was travelling as the Earl of Munster, but it

was increasingly difficult to preserve his incognito.

At Calais the travellers were entertained by the sight of Blanchard's balloon, which could be seen in the horizon near Dover. This was at half-past one. At two it was observed half-way over the Straits at a height of about 4,500 feet, but its course was so irregular that it was feared it might be carried into the North Sea. This danger was avoided by the aeronaut, and at three o'clock a cannon was fired to celebrate the fact that the balloon had arrived in Calais. There was some difficulty about the actual landing, but at half-past three Blanchard alighted with his passenger, and was presented with the freedom of the City of Calais.

The Duchess of Clarence brought the Princess Carola of Saxe-Meiningen with her to England, and she and the Duke settled down to their usual quiet existence at Bushey. The Duke's principal occupation at this time was the building of Clarence House, now the residence of the Duke of Connaught, and he and the Duchess made many excursions from Bushey to London to see how their new abode was progressing. It was built with three tiers of nine windows, the first floor and balcony being supported by six Doric columns, while six Ionic columns decorated the upper part of the building.

Opposite this house a more magnificent building was in course of erection for the use of the

Duke of York. It was not finished at his death, and has received many names in succession. First known as York House, it was sold at the Duke's death by his creditors, was bought by the Duke of Sutherland, and named Stafford House. Lancaster House is its latest appellation, and it now houses the collection known as the London Museum. A short distance from this erection Buckingham Palace reared its ugly head. There was general discontent at the erection of these sumptuous palaces by elderly men, and the opinion that something might be left for the Princess Victoria to build when she came to the throne was expressed in the Press with the freedom characteristic of the time.

A few months after the return of the Duke and Duchess of Clarence to England, a death occurred which was destined to make an enormous difference to their fortunes. The Duke of York, heir-apparent to the throne, was taken ill with gout and dropsy in December 1826, and in January 1827 he died. Although the scandal caused by the fact that his mistress, the notorious Mrs. Clarke, had sold many army appointments during his term of office as Commander-in-chief had lowered him in public estimation, he had lived down his unpopularity, and his death was much lamented.

The Duke of Clarence was now heir-apparent to the throne. An extremely welcome addition

of £3,999 to his income was granted him by Parliament, and the Duchess received an extra yearly grant of £6,000. Objection being made to this grant to the Duchess, the Chancellor pronounced an eloquent eulogy on her. He said: "If benevolence, amiability, and virtue could give her a claim to regard and consideration, most fully was she entitled to them [cheers]. Not only did she seem possessed of every grace that could adorn the mind in her own domestic circle, but whenever occasion called her from her home, she attracted affection by her kindness, and admiration by her benevolence." ¹

In the desire to confer a certain importance upon the usually contemned "Billy," Canning revived the obsolete office of Lord High Admiral for his benefit, and in April 1827 it was conferred upon him.

The quiet days at Bushey were now over, for the Duke had a mania for tours of inspection, and was generally accompanied by the Duchess in his travels along the coast. Her enthusiasm for the Navy was very great. She was always proud of having been the wife of a Sailor King, and gave orders in her Will that her body should be carried to the grave by sailors.

On one of these tours when the Duchess passed through the town of Hatherleigh on her way to

¹ *Morning Post*, Report of Parliamentary Debate, February 17th, 1827.



WILLIAM IV.

From a portrait by Sir Thomas Lawrence, P.R.A., in the possession of Miss FitzClarence.

pay a visit to Lord Clinton and others in the West of England, a characteristic trait is related of her. A Mr. Roberts had formerly been a midshipman on board Admiral Graves's flagship, and in 1771 had lost both hands in the explosion of a hand grenade. As soon as he recovered from the effects of this accident, he had artificial hands made for him, and with great spirit and determination he not only taught himself to write, but also acquired great proficiency in drawing. He then started a school near the town for boys intending to go into the Navy. When the Duchess of Clarence arrived at Hatherleigh she sent for him and accorded him a very gracious reception, at which he was naturally much delighted.

Together the Duke and Duchess visited Plymouth, where they gave a grand ball on board the ship *Queen Adelaide*, and they went to Dover to meet the Queen of Würtemberg, who now paid her first visit to England since she had left it thirty-one years earlier.

On March 18th, 1828, the anniversary of the battle of Waterloo, a characteristic entertainment was given by the Duke of Clarence. This consisted of a lunch-party on board several ships fastened together in the Thames so that it was possible to pass from one to the other. The lunch tables were laid below, the Royal Family and the Ambassadors and their wives being seated at one, while a medley of people crowded

to the others. After lunch the Duke of Clarence made a speech about the campaign of Waterloo, in which he annoyed Mme. von Bülow, the wife of the Prussian Minister to England, by the omission of all mention of Blücher's name as helping to win the Battle of Waterloo.

The day after this fête the Duke and Duchess conducted a large party to Astley's Theatre, where the battle of Navarino and several other engagements were represented. The guests returned to the Admiralty for supper. A little later the Duke and Duchess gave an evening party at the Admiralty, an entertainment which astonished Mme. von Bülow, who had only just arrived in England, and had evidently never seen anything of the sort before. She says : " The crowd and heat were perfectly suffocating. You cannot imagine such an evening party till you have seen it, and it amused me as a curiosity. There was such a terrible crowd that the men had to put their hats on in despair, and I found it quite difficult to keep hold of Bülow's arm. After vainly searching for the Duchess in several rooms, we gave up trying to present ourselves to our hostess. We found the Duke in a little room where they were washing up china, and after resting there a few moments we beat a retreat at about one o'clock ; to judge by the string of carriages driving up to the Admiralty even at that hour, half the visitors could not have yet arrived. I kept thinking of the saying,

‘You cannot walk for people.’ You cannot imagine anything more curious than these parties; whole families parade the rooms arm-in-arm, and I am always particularly amused to see husbands and wives in this position, standing stock still on one spot a whole evening. My chief enjoyment consists in looking at the numberless pretty and often really beautiful women you see here.”¹

The receptions at Admiralty House soon came to an abrupt conclusion. The Duke’s brain, never very strong, was quite upset by his unexpected position as heir-apparent to the throne. His idea of his own importance became so inflated that he tried to make himself independent of all authority, and was soon engaged in a dispute with Sir George Cockburn, who, at the head of the Board of the Admiralty, did the real work of directing the Navy. Some of the Duke’s views on naval matters seem to have been of value. He was most anxious that the Treasury should provide funds for pensioning old officers and thus securing the promotion of younger men, and wished the Admiralty to become really naval instead of being a Government Department exerting political influence.

However, on this occasion the Duke of Wellington, then Prime Minister, was obliged to interfere, and the Duke of Clarence was forced to resign his position as Lord High Admiral. The

¹ *Nordlinger Gabriele von Bülow*, p. 134.

Duchess of Clarence could not for a long time forgive the Duke of Wellington for his want of consideration and respect towards her husband, and the Duke of Wellington himself allowed that he had dismissed his Royal Highness with scant ceremony.

The step appears to have been absolutely necessary, for in 1828 the Duke of Clarence was mentally in a most unstable condition. Writing in 1834, the Princess Lieven remarked that the King of England showed symptoms which presaged insanity. She goes on: "What I was not aware of, but recently learnt, is that in 1828 he was so violent for a fortnight that it was found necessary to put him in a strait waistcoat. Wellington, who was Prime Minister at the time, knew all about it."¹

The Duke of Cumberland now announced publicly that his brother, like his father, was insane and would not be fit to ascend the throne. The Duchess of Clarence must have suffered terribly at his condition, and her tact and gentle firmness doubtless helped to restore his condition to reason.

The Duchess of Clarence found a friend about this time in Gabriele von Bülow, wife of the new Hanoverian Minister. Mme. von Bülow writes to her father, Wilhelm von Humboldt: "The Duchess of Clarence wins all hearts by her goodness and amiability.

¹ Robinson, *Letters of Princess Lieven*, p. 373.

Her kindheartedness is more than Royal politeness."

Mme. von Bülow stayed two or three times at Bushey, and gives a pleasant picture of the life there. She was much struck by the extreme punctuality of both the Duke and Duchess, and she enjoyed the long walks, and the visits to the pleasure grounds, kitchen gardens, and hot-houses, the excursions to Kew to call on the Cumberlands, and to Hatfield, where the Marquis of Salisbury gave a delightful fête, including an amateur dramatic performance. She enjoyed, too, her talks with the Duchess—"If only she were not a Duchess!" she says amidst admiring comments on her virtues and extreme naturalness.¹ The two ladies sat in the Duchess's private sitting-room, where a dress was being embroidered in coloured wools for Princess Victoria, and the Duchess gave her visitor a lesson in sewing.

Life at Bushey was indeed like life at any quiet country house, and the Duchess loved her home, enjoyed her position as Ranger of Bushey Park, and dreaded the prospect of having to exchange the congenial life she was leading for the busy office of a Queen.

George IV had for some time lived in impenetrable retirement, his only occupation being building, and his only intimates Lady Conyngham and her friends. "He never speaks of business ;

¹ *Nordlinger Gabriele von Bülow*, p. 133.

nor even gives a thought to the state of the country," says Lady Shelley.¹ During the early part of the year 1830 the King was very ill, and it was evident to the well-informed that his ignoble existence would soon come to an end. An indication to the observant that the Duchess of Clarence would soon be raised to a higher dignity, was given by the fact that Lady Jersey came to Bushey to pay her a visit. She was not on terms of intimacy with the Duchess, and had never troubled to come to see her before. She was received with some coolness, and to the delight of the malicious, her hostess, who was quite equal to the occasion, expressed surprise at a "pleasure so new and unexpected."

The Duke of Clarence was now nearing a supreme and unexpected dignity, and in spite of his genuine affection for his brother, the prospect must, to one of his temperament, have been intoxicating. During his brother's illness, he entertained visitors in a way which would now seem to us unbecoming. On May 4th and 8th, 1830, dinner parties took place at Bushey Park, but on the 25th it was evident that the end was near, and the Duke of Clarence took up his abode at Windsor and visited his dying brother daily. For another month the King's wonderful constitution triumphed, and it was not till June 26th, 1830, that he breathed his last.

¹ *Diary of Lady Shelley*, vol. i. p. 146.

² *Croker Papers*, vol. i. p. 59.

CHAPTER VIII

Popularity of William IV and Queen Adelaide—Appointment of the Queen's Household—Her charities, private letters—George IV's funeral—William IV's excitement—Duke of Cumberland—The new King and Queen's simplicity—Review in Hyde Park—Friction between William IV and the Duchess of Kent—The FitzClarence family—Queen Adelaide's kindness to them—Life at Brighton

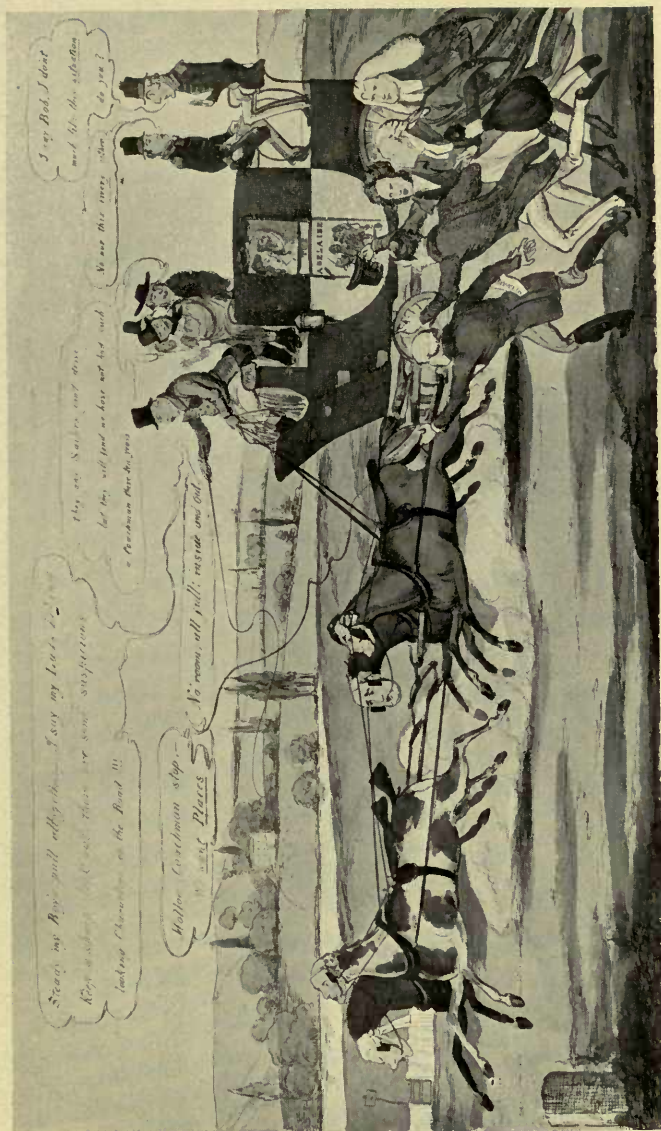
THE talented, emotional, basely selfish, and dissipated George IV had at last left a stage on which he had for long resigned the fatigues of playing the principal rôle, and the ambiguous establishment at the King's Cottage, Virginia Water, had ceased to be.

A sigh of relief was breathed throughout the country, and Lady Conyngham and Knighton, the ruling spirits of that establishment, were devoted to general execration. The lady's rapacity, which had earned for her during the last reign the sobriquet of "the guard wot looks after the Sovereign," excited general fury. In the caricatures of the time she is always hugely stout, and is represented packing bandboxes and trunks with jewels, pocketing large sums of money, or crawling out of the house by back passages with her ill-gotten gains.

William IV was meanwhile in the highest favour. The caricatures of the time show this. In these he is always represented in a pleasing light. He refuses to be led by that popular bugbear the Duke of Wellington; he takes his place firmly at the helm of office; above all, he is credited by being an ardent advocate of Parliamentary reform.

In most of these representations the Queen, bland and smiling, is with him; he is the model husband. It is nowadays the fashion to consider Queen Adelaide a nonentity; but she loomed large in the eyes of her contemporaries. She had reformed William; she was in part responsible in the eyes of the people for a change from a state of things which had outraged public morality. She signified—in contra-distinction to the detested Lady Conyngham—the placing of what would in those days have been termed the “virtuous female” in her rightful position. For the time the FitzClarences were forgotten, and William, who had married a good, sensible, and tolerant woman, and had learnt to appreciate her, shone in the reflected glory of his wife as a model of conjugal virtue.

“What a fortunate country is this to have such a Queen!” wrote Gabriele von Bülow; “may she be happy in her exalted position! She will be a saving angel for all the family. Already on Sunday she brought about a reconciliation between the Dukes of Cumberland and



FIRST NAUTICAL SOVEREIGN COACH, 1830, JUST STARTED—PRO BONO PUBLICO.

William IV driving, Queen Adelaide inside, Wellington and Peel as discontented lackeys, Grey and Brougham as leaders.

Sussex, and it is solely due to her that the former is outwardly on friendly terms with the Duke of Clarence.”¹

For the present not much was seen of the new Queen, for while William, excited and delighted by his elevation, bustled about London, gaining popularity by the undoubted kindness of his heart, while he excited ridicule by his eccentricities, the Queen remained quietly at Bushey, exchanging visits with the Duchess of Kent, and leading her usually retired life. “I cannot yet accustom myself to the long-expected event,” she wrote, “and it will be some time before I am familiar with its reality.”

It was now necessary to appoint the Queen’s household. The Marchioness of Wellesley, the Marchioness of Mayo (to whom special objection was made by the Liberal press at the time of her appointment), Countess Brownlow, the Countess of Westmeath, and Lady Clinton, were made Ladies of the Bedchamber; Miss Olivia de Roos, Miss Eden, Miss Courtenay, Miss Hope Johnston, Miss Mitchell, and Miss Sneyd became Maids of Honour; and Lady William Russell, Lady Isabella Wemyss, Lady Caroline Wood, the Dowager Lady Bedingfield—to whom we are indebted for several graphic pictures of Queen Adelaide’s Court—Mrs. Berkeley, Mrs. Paget, and Mrs. Hope were Women of the Bedchamber.

The Duke of Sussex wrote to Lord Wellesley

¹ *Nordlinger Gabriele von Bülow*, p. 185.

to say that the Queen was much delighted when his wife accepted the post of Lady of the Bedchamber. Queen Adelaide was, in fact, much attached to Lady Wellesley, to whom, while Lord Wellesley was Viceroy of Ireland, she often wrote most affectionately. Some of these letters are preserved in the British Museum. Ireland was in a most distressed condition, and Queen Adelaide was as usual extremely anxious to help the poor. Disturbances were taking place among the starving people in Limerick, and the Queen, hoping to further the manufacture of Irish fabrics, wrote to Lady Wellesley asking for patterns of Irish poplin. She wanted one for her own wear, and a pink poplin trimmed with silver as a present for Princess Helen of Prussia.

The tone of the letters to Lady Wellesley is simple, unpretentious, and kindly. The Queen congratulates her on having her mother with her, "knowing from experience so well what a blessing it is to be with a beloved Mother."¹ She sends messages to Lady Carmarthen, and gives her the name of the best doctor at Ems, in whose house she had lodged during her visits there as Duchess of Clarence, when the Duke had had his baths brought to him, while she went out to take hers. She tells about the health of her sister's daughter Louise, who was paralysed from spinal disease, says the King is well, and she better, though she still suffers from a cough.

¹ British Museum, MSS. Room, 37414, ff. 64-163.

Queen Adelaide did not join in the procession at George IV's funeral, but sat in the small gallery known as the Queen's closet which adjoined the altar. This was entered from St. George's Chapel by a private entrance made under the window in the chancel.

She must have watched her husband with anxiety and dismay, for he was so much excited by his elevation to the regal dignity, that instead of walking solemnly behind the coffin as chief mourner, he nodded to right and left, and running up to different people in the stalls shook hands heartily with them. On his first appearance at his Council he caused general consternation by remarking, just after he had spoken of his brother with a proper softening of his voice, "This is a damned bad pen you have given me."

These and similar indications of mental disturbance must have filled the Queen with apprehension. She was the only person who could control William IV during the fits of excitement to which he was subject, and the fate of his father, the unfortunate George III, must have often recurred to her mind.

So marked were William's aberrations of intellect that the Duke of Cumberland appears to have seriously mooted the project of setting him aside as of unsound intellect, and himself ascending the throne. William IV knew this, and felt much distrust of his brother. The

Duke of Cumberland, the cleverest of all George III's sons, is a strange and sinister figure. He had exercised much influence over George IV, by whom he was greatly feared. During his reign he had held the office of Gold Stick, and had gradually usurped the functions of all the other Colonels of the Guard. Of this office William at once deprived him, to the Duke of Wellington's great satisfaction, as the Duke of Cumberland had already used the authority he had usurped in a disloyal manner.¹

In retaliation, the Duke of Cumberland refused to turn his horses out of what were properly the Queen's stables. When Lord Erroll, her new Master of Horse, who had married Elizabeth FitzClarence, asked the Queen where her horses were to be housed, she remarked that "of course, she knew nothing about it, but in the proper place."² It was impossible to remove the Duke of Cumberland's horses forcibly without a special order from the King, and when this order was given, the Duke of Cumberland answered that "he would be damned if they should go." The Duke of Leeds then said that he should be forced to the painful necessity of sending the King's grooms to remove them, and the Duke of Cumberland was obliged to give way, which he did very sulkily.

Queen Adelaide's rôle must have been difficult,

¹ *Greville Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 22.

² *Ibid.* vol. ii. p. 5.

as with attentive gentleness and the good sense which was one of her principal attributes she watched over the King. Her influence seldom appears on the surface, but it was exerted with good effect to stop the King from taking unattended rambles in London. He did this soon after his accession, and was surrounded by a mob, applauded, cheered, and kissed by women. He was protected with the utmost difficulty by two lookers-on, who descended from their post at a club window to his rescue, and were, to their intense indignation, shoved and kicked by the crowd. The King rather enjoyed the situation, and remarked that after a little time the people would become accustomed to the sight of him and would no longer be any trouble. The Queen, however, took the matter more seriously, and said that in the future the King must either walk earlier or in some less public place than St. James's Street, and the King evidently assented to her wishes.

The King and Queen were perfectly simple in their tastes. On their first visit to Windsor after their accession they drove there in a pony-carriage phaeton with the King sitting in front; but on August 10th they made a more dignified entrance, and stopped at Osterley, where they entertained sixty or seventy people at breakfast. Even then no one knew that they were coming to Windsor, and though the King insisted that the entrance to the Royal Borough should be

made at a foot's pace so that he might be seen by everyone, hardly anyone recognised them. However, on Saturday and Sunday the Terrace was thrown open to the public, and was thronged by a gay crowd.

The Queen's timidity and conservatism showed themselves on her arrival at Windsor. Gas had been introduced into the Castle, but with her usual fear of innovations the Queen considered this dangerous, and ordered that it should all be cut off. The feelings of the functionaries who were obliged to find their way about the galleries by the light of wax candles are not recorded. However, as the wax candles were only lit once, and then became a perquisite of certain of the Household, they at least were satisfied.

Society in London was much amused because, when the King and Queen drove out with the King of Würtemberg, who was visiting London, they "dropped" him at Grillon's Hotel in Albemarle Street. There were also many delighted repetitions of William's speech to his guests at the close of a party he gave in St. James's Palace, when he dismissed them with the words, "Now, ladies and gentlemen, I wish you good-night. I will not detain you any longer from your amusements, and shall go to my own, which is to go to bed; so come along, my Queen."

The King's extraordinary want of dignity must have caused the Queen genuine distress, for

she played her part with grace and propriety. Even Greville, who disliked her extremely, apparently because she was plain and had a bad complexion, allows that her manners were good, and that at all public functions, which he knew she hated, she looked, in popular parlance, "every inch a Queen." He was obliged to allow also that she sat the throne very well when she received addresses from the Universities, and comported herself with dignity when she held an informal Drawing-room at Lady Bathurst's house.

At a Review in Hyde Park, when a frightened woman fled to the Queen's carriage for protection, Queen Adelaide held her by the arm till she could be led by the King to a place of safety. We can imagine the pleasure with which this little incident was noted. That day was a busy one for the King and Queen, as after the Review they lunched with the Duke of Wellington. In the evening a Chapter of the Knights of the Garter was held for the purpose of investing the King of Würtemberg with the insignia of the Order. To attend this it was necessary for ladies to be attired in full Court dress, and the Queen advised her two German friends the Countess von Bülow and the Countess Münster to have trains of *crêpe* tacked to their dresses and to take them off after dinner, as she was going to do. The ceremony was most picturesque, the costumes worn by the Knights of

the Garter being extremely splendid, and even the Duke of Sussex looked a fine figure. The Queen's entry was most effective. She and all the Princesses, including the Princess Victoria who followed her, were in deep mourning, with long trains, and veils reaching to the ground. "The veil suits the Queen's beautiful fair hair and white neck perfectly,"¹ writes Mme. von Bülow; "indeed, I have never seen her more becomingly dressed than on Monday, when I was pleased to see how well she played her Royal part. She has learned it so quickly and without losing any of her own individual amiability and characteristic courtesy."

A pretty story is told of Queen Adelaide when the King first opened Parliament, and she, with her ladies and some other members of the Royal Family were watching the procession from a garden opposite St. James's Palace. After it had passed, cries of "The Queen! The Queen!" were raised. In response to these, Queen Adelaide took the little Princess Victoria in her arms and held her on the wall beside her. This graceful action was greeted with much enthusiasm, someone in the crowd shouted "God Save both Queens!" and there was general cheering.

In these early days, the Queen shared fully in the King's popularity. At a performance at Drury Lane, consisting of *The School for Scandal*,

¹ Nordlinger Gabriele von Bülow, p. 192.

followed by a pantomime, which was attended by the King and Queen, accompanied by Prince George of Cumberland and Prince George of Cambridge, tremendous cheering broke forth when, at the finish, a special prayer for the Queen was introduced with the National Anthem. No doubt the King's action in not insisting on what was called an "outfit," in other words a grant of £50,000, for the Queen, when he found this unpopular in the country, helped to rouse enthusiasm about the new Sovereigns. The *Times* was specially enthusiastic in praise of King William's generosity.

The King meanwhile was constant in his admiration of his Royal Consort. On a visit which the Royal couple paid to Lewes on August 30th, 1830, when they lunched at Sir John Shelley's house and inspected the infant schools, he made a speech in which he praised his consort as "an individual so excellent in every amiable and good feeling."

The question of the Regency was brought forward before the end of the year 1830, and it was settled that if the Queen were to have a child and the King died before its majority, she should act as its guardian and as regent; but that if she were childless and the Princess Victoria ascended the throne at her Uncle's death, the Duchess of Kent should be her daughter's guardian, and should act as regent during her minority. As this was the most probable con-

tingency, the Duchess of Kent increased in importance very greatly.

So great a debt of gratitude is due to her for the admirable manner in which she educated her daughter, that it would be an ungraceful office to criticise her severely. However, it is easy to see that from the point of view of King William and Queen Adelaide, she gave much cause for offence.

The King would have liked to have been on terms of great intimacy with his niece. He was extremely fond of the two Georges his nephews, and he evidently wished to be allowed to assume fatherly relations towards the Princess Victoria also. Queen Adelaide too had, from her niece's babyhood, been very devoted to her, and it would have given her intense pleasure to have met her often now. Any intimacy between the aunt and niece was, however, completely prevented by the Duchess of Kent, who was determined that the Princess should have nothing to do with the Court. Doubtless she was extremely jealous of any divided authority, and was determined that her daughter should be guided by her influence in everything. Her ostensible reason, however, must have been peculiarly galling to the King. She could not allow the Princess to come into contact with the FitzClarences. When Lord Grey remonstrated with her on the subject, she answered: "But, my Lord, how can you wish me expose my daughter to hearing bastards spoken about,

and of asking me for an explanation of the word?" "Then, Madam," answered Lord Grey, "you must not allow the Princess to read the history of the country she is destined to govern, for the first page of it will show her that William of Normandy was nicknamed the Bastard before he was called the Conqueror."¹

Therefore, because the King and Queen were continually surrounded by the FitzClarences, because at Windsor, St. James's Palace, or the Pavilion at Brighton, they drove, rode, lunched, dined, and spent the evening with their Majesties, the Princess Victoria was kept carefully away from her Uncle and Aunt.

Lady Munster, who, being daughter of William's youngest daughter by Mrs. Jordan, and of the Honourable John Kennedy Erskine, married her cousin the second Earl of Munster, tells of her only meeting with the Princess Victoria in her childish days. King William's grandchildren were continually in his company, and one day, while they were staying at Windsor, the order came that they should appear at lunch. Miss Erskine, as she then was, was placed near a girl much younger than the rest of the company, and anxious to put her next-door neighbour at her ease, addressed her with much amiability, "Parlez-vous Français, mademoiselle?" to which the little girl smiled and bowed, but made no answer. Of a second and third repetition of the

¹ *Chronique de Duchesse de Dino*, vol. i. p. 64.

question she took no notice, and then Miss Erskine was rebuked by a lady she did not know, and was told that she "had no right to address the Princess Victoria."¹ The Duchess of Kent must have looked with horror at the juxtaposition of her preciously guarded child to one of those whom she evidently considered outside the pale of society; indeed, the lunch party does not appear to have been, under the circumstances, very judiciously arranged.

William's children and grandchildren no doubt gave him immense pleasure, though in the case of the older generation it was a pleasure chequered by worry; but their presence must have been peculiarly trying to the Queen, as it kept away relations for whom she felt real affection, and who she must have known should by rights have been prominent figures at her Court. In spite of her goodness and amiability, she doubtless shared to some extent the Duchess of Kent's feeling about the offspring of such irregular alliances, and when we read in Lady Munster's *Recollections* that she "helped them with a mother's tenderness," we realise what a remarkably good woman she was.

From the time that their father ascended the throne the ambiguous position of the Fitz-Clarences caused much trouble. When William had only been King a fortnight, Charles Greville writes: "In the meantime it is said that the

¹ *My Memories*, Countess of Munster, p. 53.

bastards are dissatisfied that more is not done for them, but he cannot do much for them at once, and he must have time. He has done all he can; he has made Erroll¹ Master of the Horse, Sidney² a Guelph and Equerry, George FitzClarence the same and Adjutant-General, and doubtless they will all have their turn.”³

The King, indeed, employed his sons on many missions. He sent George FitzClarence “from dinner in his silk stockings and cocked hat to Boulogne to invite the King of Würtemberg to come over”⁴; and it seems rather hard that under these circumstances the Duke of Leeds should have made a wry face when FitzClarence asked that he might use two of his father’s horses to supplement his own. However, before the end of the year the King had quarrelled violently with his sons. George FitzClarence had requested to be made a peer and to receive a pension, and when his father refused, all the FitzClarence sons struck work in a body, and Lord Hill and afterwards Brougham were called in to reason with them.

These disputes must have been most distressing to Queen Adelaide, who longed to live in peace, wished everyone to be happy and

¹ The Earl of Erroll married Elizabeth, William’s third daughter by Mrs. Jordan.

² Sir Philip Sidney, afterwards Lord de l’Isle and Sidney, who married Sophia, William’s eldest daughter by Mrs. Jordan.

³ *Greville Memoirs*, ed. 1875, vol. ii. p. 7.

⁴ *Ibid.*, ed. 1875, vol. ii. p. 10.

contented, and dreaded the scandal of disputes between the King and his natural children. These were continually recurring, and the King's sons did not hesitate to speak in a most disrespectful manner about their father. Much was kept from Queen Adelaide, but she heard quite enough to make her extremely unhappy.

On the King's birthday a splendid banquet was given at Windsor Castle, and after all their fatigues and excitements, the King and Queen must have been delighted to move to Brighton at the end of August. Here they tried to escape from the trammels of Royalty. In the morning they walked on the pier, and in the afternoon the Queen, who was an accomplished horsewoman, rode out or drove herself in her pony phaeton. Meanwhile, the King drove, but with either a sister or a daughter.

King William's happiest times were spent at Brighton. Each morning he sent to the principal hotels to ask for the visitors' list. If he saw anyone whose name he knew or whom he had ever met, that individual was invited to dinner, with the result that he was accused of spending his time in entertaining tag, rag, and bobtail. When the King and Queen entered the room where their guests were assembled, the King generally took the arm of one of his daughters that she might tell him the names of the guests. He then shook hands and said a few kindly words of welcome to each.

This year the King and Queen remained as usual at Brighton till after the New Year, and on Christmas Day the Queen had a splendid Christmas-tree prepared for the grandchildren and their little friends. The children walked two by two into what was known as the "Dragon Room," where the Christmas-tree stood in the centre, and round about were little tables, each marked with a child's name and covered with toys. While Queen Adelaide, after kissing all the children, watched with pleasure their joy at the lovely gifts, her heart must often have ached with longing for the little Elizabeth, who, if she had lived, would have been the Queen of these childish revels.

Mme. von Bülow often speaks of the Queen's love for children, and her understanding of them. One of the little Bülows had been ill during their visit to Brighton, so was not able to see the Queen, who invited Mme. von Bülow to bring the children to her at St. James's Palace. The child, Mme. von Bülow relates, began at once to say to the Queen in English, "Please, Queen, I have come to see you, because I was ill in Brighton and couldn't,"¹ and then she went on telling her all sorts of things. The Queen has a real talent for entertaining children; it makes me quite sad to watch her. First she let them run about wherever they liked, and then she took us into her bedroom, and showed us all

¹ *Nordlinger Gabriele von Bülow*, p. 202.

sorts of pretty things, and the King came in just as she was holding Linchen up in her arms." "You know how dearly I love children and what an interest I take in everything concerning them,"¹ the Queen writes to her friend.

Before the Royal Family left Brighton this year, the Queen gave a ball, and it is mentioned as a noteworthy fact that the Duchess of St. Albans—"Old Mother St. Albans" as Creevey disrespectfully terms her—was not invited, though a thousand people were present. Gossip, justly or unjustly, was rife about this lady. Her career was a curious one. As the beautiful Miss Mellon the actress, she had married Mr. Child the banker, then an old man. He had bequeathed her a large fortune, and as a middle-aged woman she married the young Duke of St. Albans.

Though Queen Adelaide was surrounded continually with people, her life was a quiet one. She did not play cards, and after receiving her guests at the evening receptions, she generally retired to a room where she sat with the King at a round table and worked at embroidery. Sometimes a concert was given, and this was a great pleasure to the Queen, who was extremely fond of music. Towards the end of February this informal life came to an end, and the Court moved to Windsor, whence each alternate week they went to London. The political situation

¹ *Nordlinger Gabriele von Bülow*, p. 232.

was anxious. Catholic emancipation had not bestowed on Ireland the benefits hoped for, and the question of the repeal of the Union was mooted everywhere.

All other questions, however, paled before the burning one of Parliamentary reform, to which the whole attention of the country was now directed.

CHAPTER IX

William IV and the Duke of Wellington—Charles X's exile—Wellington and the Royal princes—Wellington's unpopularity—Caricatures—Wellington's resignation—Anomalies of Parliamentary representation—Distress among the poor—Talleyrand and the Duchesse de Dino—First Reform Bill—Lord Howe—The Queen's dislike to the Reform Bill—The King's refusal to visit the City—The Queen's unpopularity—Lord John Russell and the Reform Bill—Dissolution of Parliament—Tory prognostications

WILLIAM IV received much commendation because on coming to the throne he not only kept on the Tory Ministry with the Duke of Wellington at its head, but, with the generosity eminently characteristic of him, he forgave whatever personal grievance he might have had against the Duke as instrumental in ousting him from his position as Lord Chief Admiral, and received him with cordiality. Nevertheless, public feeling, as exemplified by the caricatures of the times, realised that the monarch's views were more liberal than those of his Prime Minister.

In one of these caricatures William is represented at the ship's rudder determined to steer his own vessel; in another, as receiving Wellington, who kneels humbly before him, while he says in a lordly manner, "You may retain your

office for the present. I will have you as pioneer to clear me an office to work on"; while in a third he sits with Queen Adelaide in a boat, and motions Wellington to remain at a distance. On the other hand, Wellington's unpopularity and the fear of his supposed ambition are shown by caricatures which represent him trying on a crown before a cheval-glass, or as saying to William IV, "You shall be King, but I will be viceroy over you."

A few weeks after William's accession the Revolution of July took place, Charles X retired into exile, and Louis Philippe, the "bourgeois King," reigned in his stead.

Queen Adelaide watched the march of events in France with much disquietude, and believed that the presence of the Duke of Wellington at the head of affairs was England's only bulwark against Revolution. She endeavoured unsuccessfully to persuade the Royal Princes to follow the King's example, and to forgive the Duke of Wellington, who, it must be allowed, had never scrupled to show the dislike and contempt he felt for them. Any reconciliation between the Duke of Wellington and the Duke of Sussex was impossible, for the latter was the only member of the Royal Family who had espoused the Whig side in politics, and though later William objected to the part his youngest brother played in furthering the Reform Bill, he was at this time credited with much influence over him. The

Duke of Cumberland hated the Duke of Wellington because he had opposed himself to his aspirations to rule England through the late King. Therefore, though later he became the ostensible head of the ultra-Tories, and joined forces with the Duke of Wellington in the great fight against the Reform Bill, he refused, in spite of the Queen's entreaties, to go to Apsley House. However, he allowed the Duchess and his son the blind Prince George to be present at a ball which was given there. The Queen told him at dinner that she was very pleased with him for this. Then turning to the Duke of Gloucester, she said: "But I am not pleased with you for not letting the Duchess go there."¹ The Duke, who was the King's cousin and brother-in-law, having married George III's daughter, and was noted for his want of sense, answered that the Duchess should never go there—he would not be reconciled; forgetting, as Charles Greville remarks, "that it matters not twopence to the Duke of Wellington and a great deal to himself."² Indeed, that great personage the Duke of Wellington, winner of Waterloo and Prime Minister, who at one time for a few months represented in his own person the whole government of the country, could easily dispense with the approval of the members of a not very wise Royal Family. He must

¹ *Greville Memoirs*, ed. 1875, vol. ii. p. 16.

² *Ibid.*, ed. 1875, vol. ii. p. 16.

have smiled inwardly at the childishness of the King's brothers when his health was drunk at a banquet given in St. George's Hall on the King's birthday, which was also the anniversary of the battle of Vimiera, and they not only refused to drink but ostentatiously turned their glasses upside-down.

The great Duke's unpopularity throughout the country was, however, extreme, and when he made a most imprudently violent speech against the Reform Bill, that panacea for all ills in the sight of the people, and added to his offences by preventing the King's projected visit to the Guildhall for fear of rioting, ridicule, abuse, and hatred were heaped on him and on his Government. The Lord Mayor, who had alarmed the Ministry with the announcement that it was not safe for the King to visit the City, because a hostile demonstration against him and his Government was impending, was, unfortunately for himself, named Key. To this the foreign title of Don was affixed by the indignant people, and he appears as the animal whose name he is supposed to bear in many caricatures.

In one of the most amusing, he figures with Wellington and Peel; the latter, who was accused by his enemies of cold selfishness and absolute want of candour, being portrayed, as he always is, as a long, lanky, expressionless youth, always in close proximity to Wellington.

The Donkey says to Wellington, " They mean to *eat* you, cut off your Heads and put them upon Temple Bar," to which Wellington replies, " You don't say so—what a diabolical plot! *Eat a Prime Minister!* Did you ever hear of anything half so horrid, Robert ? "

Even the King declined in popularity for the time, and became " The Cock wot's lost his courage."

It must have been trying for him when Adolphus FitzClarence, with the impertinence characteristic of the King's sons, asked his father to pay a bet of £100 which he had lost, because he had declared his certainty that the King would go to the City in spite of his Ministers.

The Queen did not share in the general alarm. " The Queen to the last was dying to go,"¹ Lady Granville tells us.

The fate of the Ministers was now a foregone conclusion. They were defeated on the question of the Civil List, and the Duke immediately tendered his resignation, to the intense delight and exultation of the Whigs. The news was received by Queen Adelaide with very different feelings. She was sitting at work at St. James's Palace after dinner when a note was brought to the King. When he had seen the contents, he at once left the room. He soon returned, but said nothing of what he had just learnt. However, Frederick FitzClarence, who entered the

¹ *Letters of Harriet Countess Granville*, vol. ii. p. 64.

room with him, went to the Queen, and told her in German what had happened. A lady who was near and heard what was said, exclaimed in horror, "Good God!" but though the news came upon the Queen like a thunderbolt, her demeanour did not alter, and she made no remark upon what had happened.

Writing on November 28th, 1830, Charles Greville thus paints the state of affairs: "There has been nothing new within these three days, but the alarm is still very great, and the general agitation which pervades men's minds unlike what I have ever seen. Reform, economy, echoed backwards and forwards, the doubts, the hopes, and the fears of those who have anything to lose, the uncertainty of everybody's future condition, the immense interests at stake, the magnitude and imminence of the danger, all contribute to produce a nervous excitement, which extends to all classes—to almost every individual."

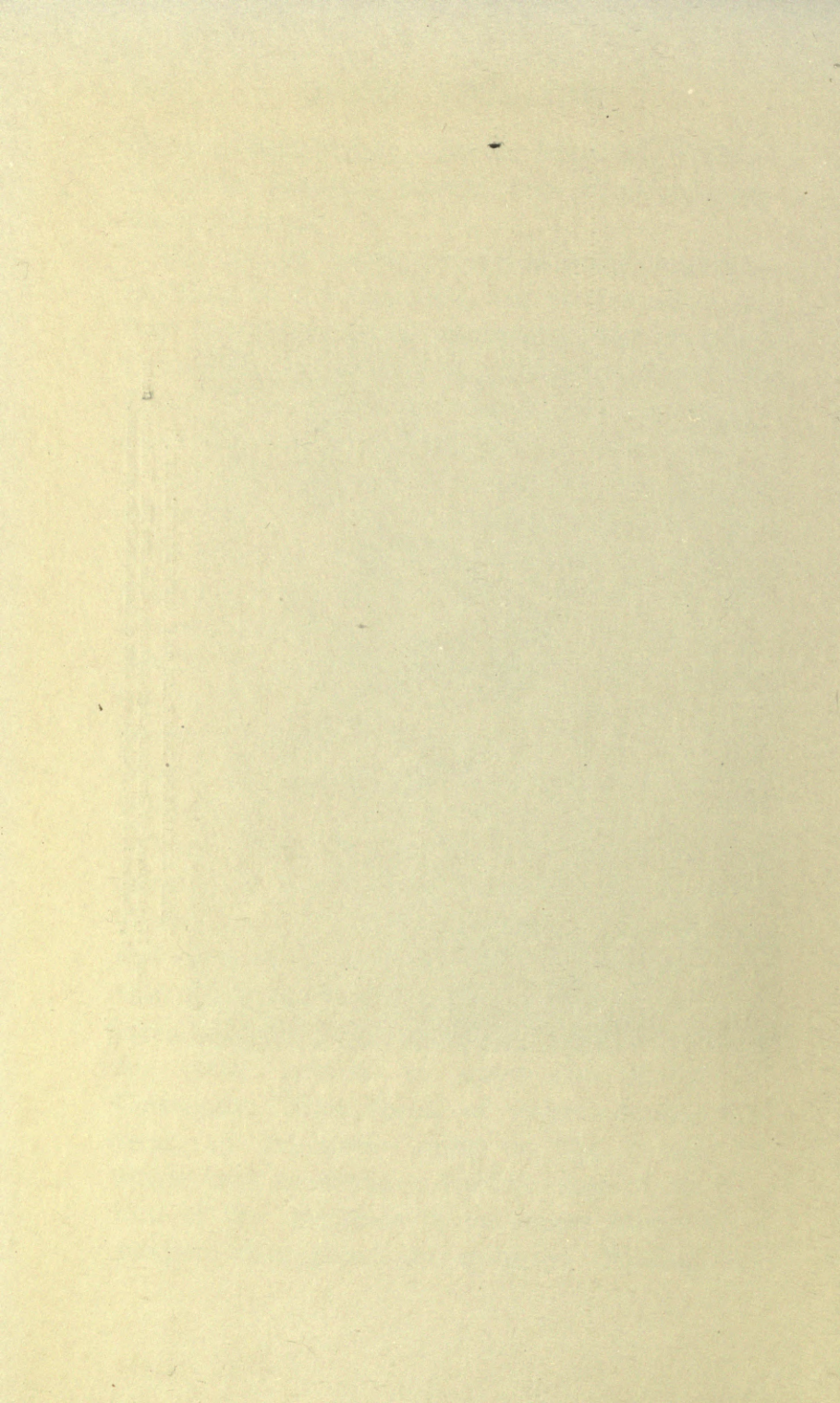
In truth the anomalies of the Parliamentary representation at that time were glaring. Since the Revolution of 1688 there had been, Mr. Marriott tells us, "no alteration either in the franchise or in the distribution of seats in England and Wales."¹ Therefore while a ruined mound sent up two representatives to Parliament, and two niches in a wall or a park without a house in it enjoyed similar privileges, Man-

¹ *England since Waterloo*, J. A. R. Marriott, p. 91.

chester, Birmingham, Leeds, Sheffield, Wolverhampton, Halifax, Bolton, and Bradford were unrepresented.

The utmost variety prevailed in the conditions entitling to the franchise, and it was estimated that two-thirds of the members of the House of Commons were elected by private interest. The Duke of Newcastle appointed eleven members, Lord Lonsdale nine, and so on. The value of a seat in the House of Commons was roughly estimated at £7,000, and bribery and corruption were rife. In York it is said that the election expenses incurred by Lord Milton and Mr. Lascelles amounted to £200,000. In fact, of the English members, 218 were returned by the nomination or influence of 87 peers, 137 by 90 powerful commoners, and 16 by the Government itself. This state of affairs could hardly be termed representative government.

These anomalies might have continued unquestioned, had not the condition of the lower classes been absolutely miserable, and had they not clung with pathetic hopefulness to the idea that a fair parliamentary franchise might bring some alleviation of their sufferings. Petitions for relief poured in upon the House of Commons. They speak of unprecedented distress, of labourers living on $2\frac{1}{2}d.$ a day, of single men receiving a weekly wage of $2s. 8d.$, and of the existence of enormous numbers of paupers throughout the country. Rioting was



indeed less prevalent than it had been ten or twelve years earlier, and there was no repetition of the March of the Blanketeers to London to plead for parliamentary reform, nor was there a second Manchester Meeting, to be followed by what was known as the Manchester Massacre. Nevertheless, the feeling in the country was now too strong to be withstood.

The French Revolution of 1830 had forced the two opposing camps in England further from each other than before, for while encouraging the Reformers, it had stiffened the resistance of the Conservatives to any change which might possibly herald in a Revolution entailing a change so radical as that of a dynasty.

The Royal Family spent their winter as usual at Brighton, where they led their usual unceremonious life. The only noteworthy circumstance during their stay on this occasion was that, in January, 1831, the King heard that Talleyrand, the *bête noire* of all the Royal Family, was in Brighton, and immediately invited him to a dinner, at which they sat down a party of forty-two. "He of course sat by the Queen," writes the Duke of Cumberland, "who really behaved like an angel, with great civility, dignity, and real grace. I never in my life saw such a monster, yet with a degree of quickness in those old eyes which tells me at once that nothing passes unnoticed by him." ¹

¹ *Diary of Lady Shelley*, p. 206.

The Queen appears always to have treated Talleyrand with perfect politeness and cordiality, and to have had a real liking for his niece the Duchesse de Dino, who was accorded the position of Ambadress, and seems to have been very popular. "Arrived [at Windsor Castle] the horrid old creature Prince Talleyrand, and his polite and handsome Niece the Duchess de Dino," writes Lady Bedingfield in 1833.¹ The Duchesse de Dino, for her part, seems to have felt sincere admiration for the Queen.

The Royal Family left Brighton towards the end of February, 1831, and on March 1st Lord John Russell brought forward what would in the future be known as the First Reform Bill. There was enormous excitement throughout the country when the long-expected day arrived, and it seemed as though England was at last to gain her desire for adequate Parliamentary representation. By this time it was generally known that while the King, open-hearted, anxious for popularity, and kindly, favoured Reform, the other members of the Royal Family, except the Duke of Sussex, were strongly against it. The head of the opposition, the Tory of Tories, was the Duke of Cumberland, who showed his absolutist principles strongly when he became King of Hanover. It is interesting to speculate what might have been the course of English politics had Queen Adelaide's

¹ *Jerningham Letters*, vol. ii. p. 389.

care of William IV been unavailing, and had it been possible for his brother to declare him insane, and to seize the throne of England. Would the country have submitted to a detested reactionary King, or would the Monarchy have fallen ?

Queen Adelaide was extremely unpopular at this time. It was believed that there was a Queen's party as well as a King's party, and there were rumours that the King and Queen had disagreed about the Reform Bill during their stay at Brighton. Certainly in the eyes of the members of Lord Grey's Ministry, the Queen's surroundings were far from satisfactory. The general feeling about them was shown by a violent scene which took place between Lady Jersey and Lord Durham, Lord Grey's son-in-law, at a drawing-room held by the Queen a few days before the propositions of the Ministry were submitted to the House. On this occasion Lord Durham, who was of fiery and irritable temper, and a strong champion of the Reform Bill, accused Lady Jersey of abusing the Whig ladies to the Queen, an accusation she vehemently denied.¹

Lord Howe, the Queen's Chamberlain, who was believed to exercise much influence over her, was notoriously hostile to the Reform Bill, against which he voted consistently ; and popular fury waxed high at the belief that domestic influences

¹ *Greville Memoirs*, ed. 1875, vol. ii. p. 119.

were at work to prevent the King from giving his support to the Bill. The *Times*, which was believed to act at this time as Lord Brougham's or Lord Grey's mouthpiece, expressed itself with much energy on the subject. On April 4th we read in its pages : " It is said that the Queen, the Princess of Hesse-Homburg, and the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester are unfriendly to Reform. . . . We have been well aware from the beginning of the degree to which an Illustrious Person had been tormented by the intrigues of certain old courtiers."

In its enthusiasm for reform, the *Times* went further, and spoke of the Earl of Limerick, who was one of the most sturdy of the anti-reformers, as " men or things with human pretensions," language for which Mr. Lawson, the editor, was brought up before the bar of the House of Commons, but after an apology was dismissed with a reprimand and the payment of fees.

William IV is a half-comic, half-pathetic figure at this time. There is no doubt that he favoured the principles of the Reform Bill, that he loved popularity, that it was intensely delightful to him to listen to acclamations which celebrated him as the Patriot king, and that he was genuinely kindhearted and anxious for the good of his people.

On the other hand, the King experienced sudden revulsions of feeling amounting to positive terror at any unexpected movement on the



SIR ROBERT PEEL, BART.

From a portrait by John Linnell, in the National Portrait Gallery.

part of the "illegal unions" which had threatened to march to London. His favourite expedient when dealing with the question of passing the Bill by increasing the number of Whigs in the Upper House, was that some eldest sons of Whig noblemen should be raised to the peerage during their fathers' lifetime, or that a like dignity should be conferred on a few large landowners among the Whigs. The mooted of more radical changes caused him intense repugnance, even alarm.

There is no doubt that while much that was said about the Queen's conduct in influencing William against the Reform Bill was untrue or exaggerated, her hostility to it was a powerful factor in increasing his indecision and distress on the subject. Even if, as Princess Augusta said, "The Queen is like my good mother—never interferes or even gives an opinion. We *may* think, we *must* think, we *do* think, but we need not speak," her influence made itself felt almost without her own knowledge. It was impossible that this should be otherwise. Queen Adelaide's views, if mistaken, were clear cut and decided. The country was in a dangerous condition. Firmness was the one necessity. The Reform Bill was a specious snare, Grey and the Whigs—the last people in the world one would think to run to perilous lengths—were guiding the nation to destruction. The Duke of Wellington was the one mainstay in the storm.

Queen Adelaide seldom spoke of the crisis—never in fact except to friends who were of the same mind as herself—and then she expressed herself with the gentleness and moderation natural to her. Her very quietness, however, only gave her greater influence.

It is true that Sir Herbert Taylor wrote to Earl Grey at the beginning of his term of office : “ The King sees numbers of persons in the course of the day, and converses freely with them upon subjects on which they may give him information, but I am confident that, although he may listen to them, he never converses upon any matter which may be the subject of communication with his Government, or respecting ministerial or official arrangements in contemplation. Politics are never the subject at dinner or at the evening parties ; indeed, his Majesty professes not to allow it, and he never touches on the subject with the Queen, who indeed does not seem at all disposed to break through a rule so essential in such a society, and whose superior judgment and good sense would induce her to feel its importance, and to discourage any departure from it in others ; even common articles of intelligence are not noticed, otherwise than as conveyed in the newspapers.” ¹

Lord Grey did not altogether agree with Sir Herbert Taylor’s estimate of the situation.

¹ *Correspondence of Earl Grey with William IV.* Letter January 15th, 1831, from Sir Herbert Taylor.

On the pretext of health, the King again refused to visit the City, and Lord Grey wrote: "The Lord Mayor feels himself peculiarly aggrieved, and is preparing, I am told, a long representation of the unpleasant consequences that will be produced by this second disappointment. I am very sorry that the King should be plagued about these matters, and I would not on any account take any part in urging him to risk an exertion which might be prejudicial to his health. But it is my duty not to conceal from him what is passing. The truth is, that, notwithstanding all that can be said to the contrary, the conduct of persons supposed to be in his Majesty's favour, like that of —— at ——, the known opinion of persons composing Her Majesty's household, and the declared hostility of the Princesses, have produced suspicions which every endeavour is used to propagate, that the King is in reality adverse to the measure of Reform." ¹

In popular caricature, Wellington is represented as persuading William IV to pretend that gout prevents him going to the City. The real reason is, however, given by Greville in his memoirs: "The King has put off his visit to the City because he is ill, as the Government would have it believed, but really because he is furious with the Lord Mayor at all the riots and uproar on the night of the illumination. That night the

¹ *Correspondence of Earl Grey with William IV*, vol. i. p. 259.

Queen went to the Ancient Concert, and on her return the mob surrounded the carriage; she had no guards, and the footmen were obliged to beat the people off with their canes to prevent their thrusting their heads into the coach. She was frightened and the King very much annoyed. He heard the noise and tumult, and paced backwards and forwards in his room waiting for her return. When she came back Lord Howe, her chamberlain, as usual preceded her, when the King said, 'How is the Queen?' and went down to meet her. Howe, who is an eager anti-Reformer, said, 'Very much frightened, Sir,' and made the worst of it. She was in fact terrified, and as she detests the whole of these proceedings, the more distressed and disgusted. The King was very angry, and immediately declared he would not go to the City at all."¹

The wave of dislike to the Queen had risen high, and would rise yet higher before the passing of the Reform Bill. William IV was to a certain extent popular, but she was his evil genius, the Marie Antoinette of the situation, the obstacle to reform, to progress, to the will of the people, the narrow-minded reactionary who was endeavouring to import the despotic government of a petty German State into free and progressive England. So people talked, and though the Queen never faltered in her opinion that the Reform Bill would usher in

¹ *Greville Memoirs*, ed. 1875, vol. ii. p. 141.

Revolution and would mean the downfall of England, she felt her unpopularity, and the storm of calumny to which she was exposed, very keenly.

She could not soften the dislike felt for her, however, for she never understood the nation among whom it was her fate to live. Lady Augusta FitzClarence, who married the King's second son, said of her a few years later, that though she was both sensible and good-natured, and had lived in England a good many years, she had not a single English notion. "The Queen's fixed Impression—said Lady Augusta—is that an English Revolution is rapidly approaching, and that her own fate is to be that of Marie Antoinette, and she trusts she shall be able to act her part with more courage. She only approves of the Duke of Wellington as being the only man to stem the revolutionary current, having an old grudge against him and having very often abused him in Lady Augusta's presence, for having turned them out of the Admiralty, for his uncourteous manner of doing it, and for the disrespectful way in which he always treated the King when he was Duke of Clarence."¹

Meanwhile, the Reform Bill introduced by Lord John Russell was undergoing a long discussion in the House. One of its provisions was to the effect that when the boroughs were

¹ *Creevey Papers*, vol. ii. p. 300.

disfranchised, the number of the members in the House of Commons should be reduced by sixty-two. The Opposition were determined to fight the Bill tooth and nail, the motion for the second reading was only passed by a majority of one, and a motion brought forward by them to the effect that there should be no reduction in the number of members in the House of Commons was passed by a majority of eight. This was a clever move, for to prevent a diminution of numbers while doing away with the rotten boroughs would entail giving more members to the manufacturing towns, and the Opposition knew that, though pledged to Reform, the great Whig peers and country gentlemen who formed the Government would dread this radical measure as much as they did themselves.

Therefore, after vainly hoping that either the Duke of Wellington or Peel would be able to form a Government, the King was reluctantly forced to give his consent to a dissolution. There was general delight at this, and William IV became for the time enormously popular. It was long quoted with intense approval that when told that there was not time for the white horses to be harnessed to take him to the House of Lords, he said, "Then I will go in a hackney coach!"¹

"England, Ireland, and Scotland, attend!"

¹ *Greville Memoirs*, ed. 1875, vol. ii. p. 136.

cried the *Times* of April 23rd. "Your King came down yesterday to dissolve Parliament, because, despising the wishes of his people, it refused to reform itself. . . . The scene was a sublime one, so far as related to His Majesty." We are glad, by the way, to hear this qualifying clause, as Lord Londonderry, "in such a fury that he rose, roared, gesticulated, held up his whip, and four or five Lords held him down by the tail of his coat to prevent his flying on somebody," Lord Lyndhurst equally furious, Lord Brougham skipping up and down, and such an uproar that no speaker could be heard, hardly seems to tend to sublimity.

Associations to help forward the Reform Bill had now been formed all over the country, and were extremely powerful. The chairman of the Birmingham Union announced that he could raise two armies, each of which would be equal to the army which had fought at Waterloo. Sussex, Northumberland, and Yorkshire were prepared to march on London if necessary.

The elections were fought in intense excitement, and to general exultation the Whigs were returned with an increased majority, with the result that on June 24th an amended Reform Bill was introduced by Lord John Russell.

The burning question of the day, the question debated backwards and forwards unceasingly, was whether the King would comply with the request of his Ministers, and create a sufficient

number of peers to ensure the passing of the Bill. The Lords were avowedly hostile to this; it was, indeed, impossible to expect them to welcome the first sounding of the knell of the privileges of their order, the first intimation that their proud estate would not endure for ever.

Terrible were the prognostications of the Tories as to the ruin which would ensue should such a breach of the constitution as the creation of peers be perpetrated. The Duke of Wellington—to whom, when pushed by Lord Grey to what in his eyes were extreme lengths, the King turned with pathetic dependence—was most tragic about the situation, and after walking up and down Rotten Row with him for two hours, Croker remarked as an echo of what he had heard, “The Bill once passed, good-night to the Monarchy, and the Lords, and the Church!”¹

The clergy took a similar view of the matter, and the Bishops as a whole voted against the Reform Bill, Phillpotts, Bishop of Exeter, whose eloquence was fiery, being one of its most formidable opponents.

However, the reformers were in the impregnable position of possessing the support of the country. The second Reform Bill was read again on July 7th, and passed by a majority of 136. The Tories fought it in Committee, but

¹ *Croker Papers*, vol. ii. p. 148.



CHARLES, SECOND EARL GREY.

From a portrait by Sir Thomas Lawrence, P.R.A., in the National Portrait Gallery.

before the end of September it went up to the Lords backed by a strong majority. The utmost excitement now prevailed as to what the Lords would do with it, and it was in the midst of this excitement and anxiety that the preparations for the Coronation were begun.

CHAPTER X

The Queen's daily life—She takes charge of the Princess Louise of Saxe-Weimar—Preparations for the Coronation—Queen Adelaide's interest in Honiton lace—Difficulties with the FitzClarences and the Duchess of Kent—Affairs in Belgium—The Coronation—The Queen holds a Drawing-room—She takes the Princess Louise to Brighton

MEANWHILE the private life of the King and Queen continued its normal course.

In 1831, as we have seen, the Queen held two drawing-rooms, at one of which the Princess Victoria made her first appearance. At a levée held a little later the King appeared in mourning because of the death of his son-in-law, the Honourable J. Kennedy Erskine, and did not go to the opera in the evening for the same reason. The Queen went to a concert next evening, but she, as well as the Margravine of Hesse-Homburg and the Duchess of Gloucester, her sisters-in-law, were in mourning. The Royal mourning excited much jealous comment, and somebody said "it was the first time a King of England had appeared in mourning that his subjects did not wear."

Towards the end of March the King and Queen

retired to Windsor to recruit after the fatigue of their duties in London, though they came to town every week during the season. They never forgot old friends, and were specially kind to a Colonel, Mrs., and Miss Clitherow, who had lived near them when they were at Bushey. These quiet people were invited to dine several times at St. James's Palace and to spend week-ends at Windsor, besides having the honour of entertaining the King and Queen at dinner at their own house. Miss Clitherow gives in her letters extremely pleasant glimpses of King William and Queen Adelaide at Windsor.

The Queen's private rooms there were very charming. A large one led into her special favourite, a turret-room, full of family pictures and souvenirs, the most precious being a statue of her baby taken after her death. The Queen was particularly fond of these rooms. In a letter to Mme. von Bülow written from Brighton, which never suited her, but where, for the King's sake, she was obliged to spend several months each year, she says :

"I found it very hard to leave Windsor on October 26th. I had to leave so much I love behind me, the beautiful country, my light, cheerful rooms full of the busts and pictures I especially value, and above all the graves so sacred to me. To be near them does me good, as it does you, to one who has lost so much even the remains which we only preserve in our

memory are a precious possession which we would unwillingly forego.”¹

The King and Queen generally breakfasted and lunched in their own apartments. They were not alone, however, for the King's married daughters and their children appear to have spent nearly all their time at Windsor. Sir Philip Sidney, who had married William's eldest daughter, was indeed slowly building himself a house at Penshurst, and came backwards and forwards, but his wife and three children lived at Windsor Palace altogether, and as Miss Clitherow shrewdly remarks, “I suspect it will be time enough to live there [at Penshurst] should anything happen to prevent their all living on ‘papa.’” Lady Augusta has a house at Isleworth near us, which ‘papa’ gave her, but lives a great deal here.”²

Even Lady Falkland, the last married daughter, who was in bad health and had been obliged to go to London to consult a doctor, left her child with the King and Queen. These children came down every day after lunch, and their laughter was heard about the corridors, the Queen entering with much zest into their games, and being called “dear Queenie,” while William IV was “dear King.”

Till they had gone the King and Queen remained

¹ *Nordlinger Gabriele von Bülow*, p. 232.

² Clitherow, *Glimpses of King William IV and Queen Adelaide*, ed. White, from which this account is taken.



ARTHUR WELLESLEY, FIRST DUKE OF WELLINGTON.
From a portrait by J. R. Wildman.

in their private apartments, perhaps in order that while the King should enjoy the society of his grandchildren, that side of his life should not be unduly intruded on the public. This was a point in which Queen Adelaide always insisted, though without much success, for the fact that the King was always surrounded by his children was commented on by all who visited his Court.

At three o'clock the Queen appeared for the first time among her guests, and arranged the amusements for the day, which always included a riding party. She rode for about three hours, and started surrounded by a crowd of ladies ; but as she allowed anyone who was tired to go home, she generally returned with only a masculine escort.

The King meanwhile drove with his sisters or daughters, and expeditions were made to Frogmore, to George IV's cottage in Windsor Park (which excited general curiosity), or to other places in the neighbourhood. The kindly, garrulous William IV stands out very clearly in Miss Clitherow's narrative. He nicknamed her to her brother and sister-in-law "Your Princess Augusta" as being the old maid of the family, it not being possible to include the unfortunate Princess Sophia in that category.

We can also picture to ourselves as frequent visitors the good-natured, jolly Duchess of Gloucester, whose husband was almost idiotic, and the widowed Margravine of Homburg with

the sweet face and the unwieldy figure, who was so enormously stout that she could hardly walk.

Another denizen of Windsor was Prince George of Cambridge, who lived with the King and Queen, while his father and mother were in Hanover. He always came down to lunch with his tutor, and often underwent much chaffing from the Queen about supposed matrimonial intentions on his behalf.

Queen Adelaide herself appears as a pleasant and amiable figure. We see her graceful, cheerful, and tactful, always well dressed, though careful that her clothes should never be in the extreme of fashion, careful, too, that her silks should be of English manufacture, and that people should notice that they were as elegant as those of French make. We see her tending the King, calming him in his fits of excitement, and watching him attentively, but without speaking, as that worried him when he was in pain, at his daily task of signing papers. He suffered so severely from cramp that he could not perform this duty without stopping continually to dip his hand in hot water. The Queen was always delicate, often complained of a pain in her side, had a constant cough, and after a specially fatiguing time with her guests was sent by the doctor to bed for twenty-four hours.

The evenings at Windsor or St. James's seem to have been spent in uniform fashion. Dinner was supposed to be at seven, but was occasionally

put off till nearly eight, because the Queen had not returned from her ride. There were generally about thirty people at dinner, this being reckoned a small party, and the appointments were very fine, the table being lit by quantities of wax candles and the plate being magnificent.

After dinner, the company arranged themselves at different tables, some playing cards, others working, while the Queen's band played at intervals. The Queen never played cards, and generally called her special intimates to sit at her table, where she sewed or showed them her sketches. The King wandered about talking to different people, perhaps showing some of them the curiosities of the Castle, or working at signatures. Sometimes Princess Augusta came over from Frogmore to dine, and helped her brother by handing him the papers, and blotting and putting them in order after he had signed them, but sometimes one of his daughters performed this office. Generally he fell asleep during the evening, and a mild spirit of boredom seems to have pervaded the assemblage.

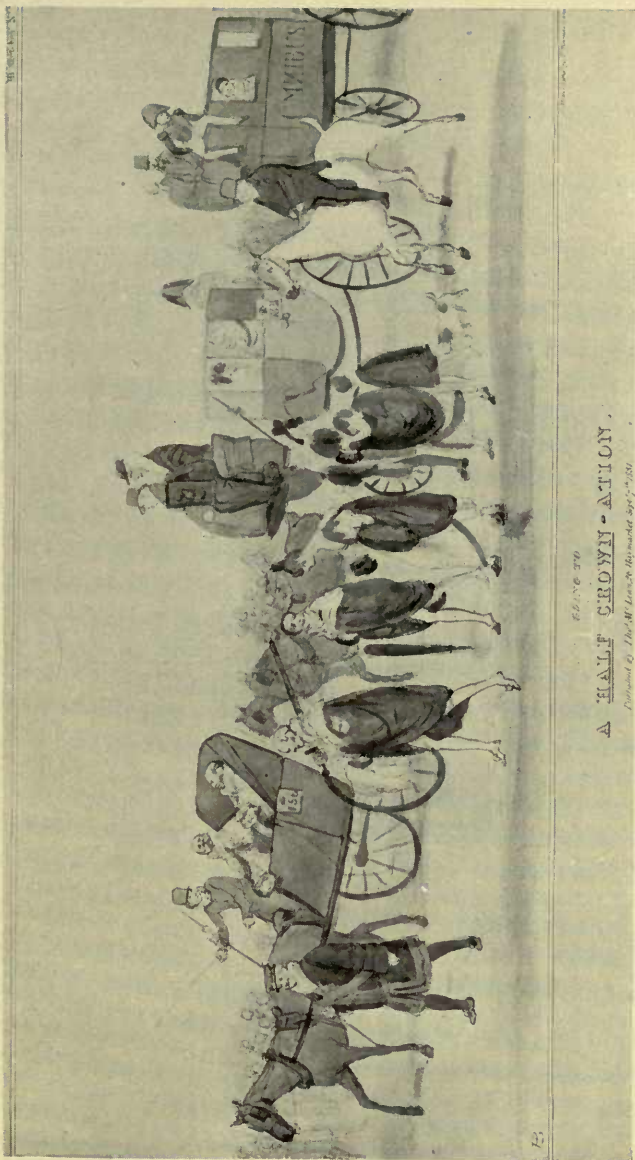
Charles Greville gives an account of a dinner party¹ after the Ascot Races at which there were about forty people present. The King attended the Races on Tuesday and Thursday, coming with a big procession, eight coaches, four phaetons, two pony sociables, and several led horses. Greville comments, as did everyone

¹ *Greville Memoirs*, vol. ii. 4th ed. p. 147.

else, on the fact that Lord Munster rode to the Races behind the King's carriage, while Frederick and Augustus drove phaetons. Apparently the ladies did not attend Ascot, and Queen Adelaide went out riding as usual. He comments on the excellence of the string band, which gave a regular set concert after the coffee, and also with acrimony on the position assumed by the King's sons, who lorded it over all the company.

On Sundays at Windsor no carriages were had out except one or two for people who were not able to walk. Neither did the Queen ride. The dinner party in the evening was, however, larger than usual, as the King invited to it all the clergy in the Chapel at Windsor. The service there must have been a trying affair, as it generally lasted for two hours and a half. The reading and singing were bad, and the Dean, who usually preached, was so indistinct that it was impossible to hear the sermon. Therefore the Queen, who said her mind often wandered during the service, and that she liked, when in church, to be serious and to think about religious matters, adopted the plan of bringing a book of sermons with her, and reading it while the Dean was in the pulpit.

In the afternoon she would take her guests over Frogmore Gardens and show them her dairy, her flower-garden and farmyard, and talk all the time with the greatest animation, for she loved her country pursuits. The children in the



GOING TO
 A HALF CROWN-ATION.

Designed by Thos. W. Kenworthy, Birmingham, 1831.

"GOING TO A HALF CROWN-ATION," 1831.

cottages would run out to greet her, and she would pat one on the head and speak kindly to another, for she knew them all. Her walking powers were great, and she would often tire her visitors, but carriages would always be in waiting at Frogmore to convey home those who were exhausted.

As Windsor Castle did not hold many people, and as the King was always surrounded by the Royal Family as well as by the FitzClarences, it is hardly surprising that he began to wish to build both at Windsor and at the Pavilion at Brighton. His loyal subjects, with a lively recollection of the architectural extravagances of the last reign, viewed his wishes with dismay. It had already been proposed to turn Buckingham Palace, which the *Times* terms "that mass of architectural warts and bunions at the foot of Constitution Hill," into barracks, and though this project was overruled, and the Knightsbridge Barracks were built instead, the public were indignant that the official estimate of £250,000 for building it had already been exceeded. The expense of the alterations made by George IV to Windsor Palace, which were to have totalled £300,000, had amounted now to £594,000, and King William's subjects were naturally anxious that he should not follow in his brother's footsteps. Meanwhile, the Queen's Dower Bill had been passed, by which, at the King's demise, she was to receive an income of £100,000, and

was to have as residences Marlborough House and Bushey Park.

Though the King and Queen were ostensibly living at this time at Windsor, they visited London every alternate week, and on one of these occasions they went in state to open new London Bridge, on which a magnificent pavilion and tent had been erected, with tables which would accommodate 1,500 people. Here the Royal party, the Aldermen, the officers of the Corporation, and the Councilmen were entertained at lunch. The King and Queen, the Duke and Duchess of Cumberland, the Duchess of Cambridge, and several members of the FitzClarence family, assembled at St. James's Palace, drove from there to Somerset House, and thence went in thirty barges down the river to London Bridge.

In May, 1831, the Duchess of Saxe-Weimar came to England with her six children. Her eldest daughter, the Princess Louise, a girl of fourteen, was partially paralysed, and suffered from spinal complaint. Queen Adelaide was particularly fond of her, and it had been settled that her mother should leave her behind in England, that the effect of Brighton air and of sea baths should be tried for her malady.

Meanwhile, preparations for the Coronation were in progress. Both William IV and the Queen were anxious that the expenses entailed by it should not be great, that it should in fact

cost as little money and give as little trouble as possible. The banquet in Westminster Hall was to be omitted, and there was to be no procession of walkers to the Abbey. The whole affair was only to cost £50,000, and eventually the expenses of it only came to £43,159, whereas George IV's Coronation cost the enormous sum of £238,000.

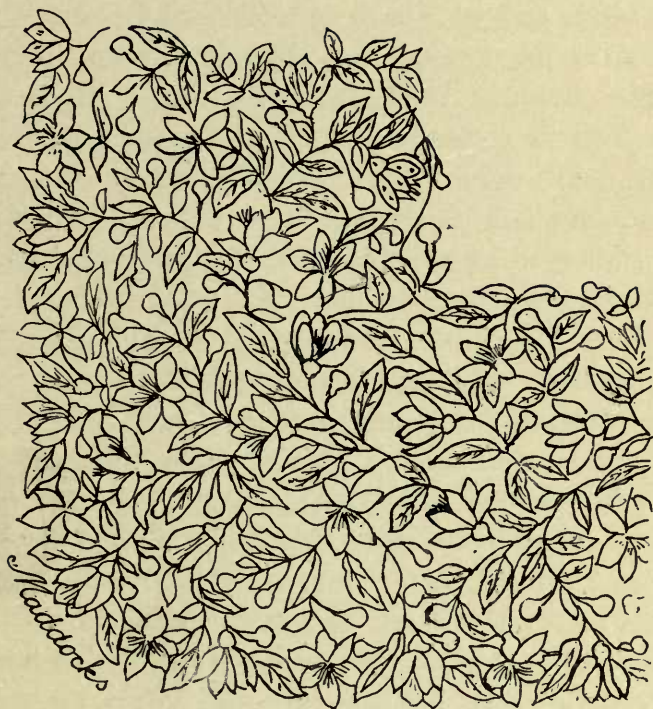
Possibly it was in gratitude for this effort for economy that in a caricature of the time William IV is represented as driving his coach triumphantly along the road of Reform and Retrenchment. Another print which had a wide circulation makes fun of the cheap Coronation, to which it represents the King and Queen as driving in a hackney-coach, while other members of the Royal Family follow in an omnibus. The unpopularity of the Queen, and the attempt to raise feeling against her, is plainly shown by some of these caricatures. In one of these she is represented as protesting against the attempt to save the people's money, and in another as fainting when her neck is exposed for anointing at the Coronation, while the Archbishop and everyone near turn away their faces. This print has reference to the fact that Queen Adelaide was supposed to object to the low dresses worn by the ladies of her Court. Anyone who has seen pictures of the décolletage of the costumes worn in George IV's reign will hardly wonder at her feelings.

Charles Greville tells that he went to Windsor

to hear from her what pattern of crown she would wish to wear, and was ushered into the King's presence. William IV was sitting behind a red table in George IV's sitting-room overlooking the garden. Portraits of Adolphus and Augustus FitzClarence hung on the walls. The Queen was summoned, and entered accompanied by the Landgravine of Hesse-Homburg and Lady Augusta Erskine.¹ "She looked at the drawings, meant apparently to be civil to me in her ungracious way, and said she would have none of our crowns, that she did not like to wear a hired crown, and asked me if I thought it was right that she should. I said, 'Madam, I can only say that the late King wore one at his coronation.' However, she said, 'I do not like it, and I have got jewels enough, so I will have them made up myself.' The King said to me, 'Very well, then, *you* will have to pay for the setting.' 'Oh no,' she said, 'I shall pay for it all myself.' "

Greville, who for some reason disliked Queen Adelaide intensely, does not allow her credit for the motive which evidently inspired her action on this occasion. We learn elsewhere that "The Queen was so anxious that no expense should be incurred on her account, that she would not permit either the purchase or hire of a crown from Rundell's for her; but ordered that it should be composed of her own jewels,

¹ *Greville Memoirs*, vol. ii. 4th ed. p. 180.



TRACING OF HONITON LACE HANDKERCHIEF MADE FOR QUEEN
ADELAIDE'S WEDDING, IN HER EFFORT TO REVIVE THE HONITON
LACE INDUSTRY.

and made up at her own expense. At the coronation of George IV Rundell's charge for the loan of jewels only was £16,000, as interest on their value." ¹

What Queen Adelaide spent on her dress at her coronation should, she determined, help as far as she could the industries of England. She had for a long time been distressed at the depression of the Honiton lace trade. The lace workers, "forsaking the designs of their forefathers," had introduced a hideous set of patterns, designed, as they said, 'out of their own heads.' 'Turkey tails,' 'flying foxes,' 'bullocks' hearts,' and the most senseless sprigs and borderings took the place of the graceful compositions of the old school; not a leaf, not a flower was copied from nature." The Queen ordered a lace handkerchief composed of sprigs copied from nature to be made at the Honiton lace-works for her to carry at the Coronation; and later, to help the distressed workers, she requested that a robe of Honiton sprigs should be made for her use. With the desire of also helping the machine workers, the ground was to be of machine-made lace. Round the skirt was a wreath of elaborately designed flowers, Amaranth, Daphne, Eglantine, Lilac, Auricula, Ivy, Dahlia, and Eglantine, the initial letters forming the name Adelaide.

¹ *Journal of T. Raikes, Esq.*, vol. i, p. 11.

² *History of Lace*, Mrs. Bury Palliser, p. 355.

A slight difficulty arose in the arrangements for the Coronation from the fact that the King suddenly announced that he objected to being kissed by the Bishops! The Bishops, on the other hand, refused to relinquish this proof of their cousinship with Royalty, and the Archbishop remonstrated. Therefore his Majesty was obliged to submit "to the salute of the spiritual as well as of the temporal peers."

The FitzClarences were dissatisfied with the precedence allowed them at the Coronation. However, as Greville, who was present at all the Coronation Committees, does not mention this fact, it is evident that they only applied to the King privately for the recognition they considered their due, and that the King wisely refused their request without allowing the matter to go any further. He did what he could to give them distinction, as he put the Coronation Procession under the charge of Lord Frederick FitzClarence, his second son; while Lord Adolphus FitzClarence, as Groom of the Robes, drove in the fourth Royal carriage; and Sir Philip Sidney, the husband of his eldest daughter, rode beside it as one of the King's equerries. Nevertheless, there was much discontent in the family, as is evidenced by the following letter written by Lady Sophia Sidney to Sir Herbert Taylor, the King's Private Secretary: ¹

¹ *Taylor Papers*, p. 334.

“TUNBRIDGE WELLS,

“July 31st, 1831.

“MY DEAR SIR HERBERT,

“Many thanks for your kind letter, and for the interest you so amiably express for us. I cannot, however, conceal from you that we are both *disappointed*, as we had hoped that the Coronation would have afforded to the King an opportunity of complying with our wishes, without any reference whatever to *political sentiments*, or *opinions*, and that on that one occasion, unbiassed by any other consideration, he would have followed the dictates of his kind nature. As it is, my dear Sir Herbert, we leave our case in your hands, and are most grateful to you for having advocated it, relying on your kindness to bring the subject again before the King, should any opportunity present itself of forwarding our wishes, unfettered by that sacrifice of principle and opinion, which we both think is too high a price to pay for any advantage whatever.

“I lament to hear that my dear Papa has not been quite well. I am always anxious about him, and ten times more so when absent from him.

“It is very kind of you to have given me *des nouvelles*, and I sincerely hope all trace of indisposition has passed away.

“Adieu, dear Sir Herbert, and believe me ever,

“Yours most sincerely,

“SOPHIA SIDNEY.”

A more serious mishap was the fact that the Duchess of Kent did not approve of the Coronation arrangements, and therefore would not attend the ceremony herself or allow the Princess Victoria to be present, a fact which naturally gave occasion for much comment. On receiving her invitation to the Coronation, the Duchess of Kent at first accepted it, and ordered her robes. When, however, she realised that she was not to be with her daughter, but was to take her position as Dowager Princess and Peeress, while the Princess Victoria was to be under the charge of her aunts the Landgravine and the Princess Augusta, and was not to take precedence of her uncles, she objected to the arrangements, and when asked who she would wish to carry her coronet, she made no reply. The King then wrote again to her, and was answered by Sir John Conway, who said that her attendance was uncertain, but that if she did come, she would like Lord Morpeth to carry her coronet. Eventually she decided not to attend at all, the ostensible reason being that it would be hurtful to the Princess Victoria's health to leave the Isle of Wight.

A somewhat garbled version of this story appeared in the *Times*, but great efforts were made to hush it up. Creevey says¹ he was told by Lord Sefton, whose informant was Brougham, that it had been invented by Lord de Ros to

¹ *Creevey Papers*, vol. ii. p. 237.

injure the Duchess of Kent in public estimation, that the ostensible reason—care for the Princess Victoria's health—was really genuine, and that the Duchess's prudence on this occasion was extolled by the King.

The absence of the heiress to the English throne from the Coronation was considered by the King as a slight to him and to Queen Adelaide, and the relations between him and his sister-in-law became more strained than ever. The Duchess of Kent was indeed disliked by all the Royal Family. The late King had detested her, as did the Duke of Cumberland. Probably jealousy at her position as mother of the future Queen was partially answerable for this feeling, but, clever and high-principled as she was, her stiffness, want of tact, and overbearing temper were most unfortunate. George IV had nicknamed her "the Swiss Governess," and had behaved with great harshness towards her, continually threatening to take her child away from her. Queen Adelaide, however, had evidently in those early days been the confidante of her sister-in-law's troubles, for in speaking to a friend regretfully¹ of the strange way in which the Duchess now kept aloof from her, she said that in former days they had been like sisters.

It is possible that one reason for the dislike the Duchess felt for the Queen was to be found

¹ *Jerningham Letters*, vol. ii. p. 367.

in the state of affairs in Belgium. In the partition of Europe by the Allies in 1814, Holland, to which Belgium was annexed, had fallen to the portion of the House of Orange, the two countries united being known as the Netherlands.

However, the French Revolution of 1830 brought in its train a revolt among the Belgians, who, as Catholics, hated their incorporation with Calvinistic Holland, and writhed under the despotic rule of William I, King of the Netherlands, who treated Belgium as a conquered country. In defiance of the policy of the Holy Alliance, the London Congress recognised the independence of Belgium, and Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha was made King of the Belgians. Naturally the Duchess of Kent was delighted at this advancement in the fortunes of her favourite brother, naturally also Queen Adelaide, with her horror of change, particularly of change brought about by revolution, espoused the cause of the Prince of Orange; and this fact was doubtless instrumental in bringing about a coldness between the sisters-in-law. "What is going to be the last word from the Hague?" writes Princess Lieven from Richmond. "I am very curious and uneasy. Yesterday the Queen's sister, the Duchess of Saxe-Weimar, talked to me at length on the subject. She is indignant at the way the King of the Netherlands has been treated. She is all fire and flame against the conference; the Queen herself is of

the same mind.”¹ A little later the Princess writes: “The Princes and Princesses are open-mouthed on the subject of Belgium, and the Queen, according to what the Duchess of Gloucester told me (she had left her yesterday morning at Windsor), is in floods of tears.”

Queen Adelaide evidently sided very strongly with the King of the Netherlands, and was most averse to Belgium's secession from Holland. “The Queen and D'Esté are quite outrageous,” wrote Brougham to Grey on December 30th, 1832; “I really begin to think they have direct communications with Holland.”²

The Duchess of Kent no doubt felt that she was among enemies. George IV had always disliked her, but she had hoped for better things from his successor, and had been bitterly disappointed when, on William IV's accession, the Duke of Wellington refused her request that she should be treated as Dowager Princess of Wales, her daughter as heir-apparent to the throne, and that she should have sole control of the allowance for both. Now Queen Adelaide had, she thought, turned against her also, and she felt, and did not scruple to show, much bitterness towards her quondam friend.

The Coronation was fixed for September 8th,

¹ *Correspondence of the Princess Lieven and Earl Grey*, vol. ii. p. 266.

² *Life and Times of Henry Lord Brougham, by Himself*, vol. iii. p. 258.

1831, which was fortunately a fine morning, and though some disappointment was felt at the curtailment of the ceremonial, an immense crowd had assembled, and there was much cheering as the procession passed by. The Queen's bearing was much admired. In talking of the gossip about the Coronation, the Duchess de Dino says : " The Queen is the only person who escapes criticism, everyone says she was perfect, and they are right." In the absence of the Dowager Duchess of Leeds, Mistress of the Robes, her train was carried by the Duchess of Gordon. She was also attended by Lady Georgina Bathurst, Lady Mary Pelham, Lady Sophia Cust, Lady Teresa Fox-Strangways, Lady Theodosia Brabazon, and Lady Georgina Grey, and by Countess Brownlow and the Marchioness of Westmeath as ladies-in-waiting.

" My interest was naturally centred in the Queen," writes Mme. von Bülow,¹ " and I was very happy to see her so generally admired and appearing to such advantage. Though she is in reality not too good-looking, she appeared so on that day undeniably, for the beauty lay in something beyond mere outward loveliness. It was the beauty of her soul that seemed to shine out from and impress itself upon her whole person. Her bearing was full of dignity, repose, and characteristic grace ; she seemed deeply moved, and it was clear that her heartfelt devo-

¹ *Nordlinger Gabriele von Bülow*, p. 206.

tion raised her above all outward surroundings. When I saw her on the Tuesday before the Coronation, she spoke to me of this quite simply and naturally, saying she had often noticed it in herself before, and that she hoped it would again be so, particularly during the Communion service."

The King and Queen were absolutely punctual for the Coronation, arriving at Westminster Abbey exactly as the clock struck eleven. During the service there was wind and a shower of rain, but by 3.30, when the King and Queen left the Abbey, the weather was again fine. In the evening the "New Avenue," which we now know as The Mall, was illuminated and, though not finished, was in honour of the occasion for the first time opened to the public.

Directly after the Coronation, the Landgravine of Hesse-Homburg, the Duke of Saxe-Meiningen, and the Duchess of Cambridge left for the Continent.

On September 12th the Queen held a drawing-room, which was extremely crowded and a very long affair. The Queen found the Drawing-rooms extremely tiring, and generally tied a bandage round her knee to lessen the fatigue of bending continually. On this occasion the Ambassadors of Mexico, Spain, and Naples fainted, and Mme. de Lieven, the specially privileged Ambassador of Russia, seems to have been the one lady present who managed to be compara-

tively comfortable. She sat on the throne steps, and went into the King's private room for lunch, whence she came out and told the other ladies of the "Corps Diplomatique" how fortunate she had been—news which they, tired and hungry, hardly found soothing.

An unfortunate incident took place at this Drawing-room. Lady Ferrers, who had been her husband's mistress before he married her, insisted on her right as a peeress to be presented. It was in vain that Lord Howe told Lord Ferrers that the Queen would turn away her head when Lady Ferrers appeared. Lady Ferrers insisted on coming. "But I must say," remarked the Duchesse de Dino,¹ "that the Queen's kindliness showed itself even on this occasion. She appeared to be beginning a conversation with the Princess Augusta before Lady Ferrers came in front of her; she did not stop to interrupt her conversation, and anyone looking on might have thought that the poor proscribed creature had passed unnoticed instead of being humiliated. I thought it very nice of the Queen."

Queen Charlotte was of sterner mould. When the Duchess of Argyll implored her to receive her daughter, the Countess of Derby, who had eloped from her husband, and when she refused, asked tearfully what she would say to the culprit, "Say you did not dare to make such a

¹ *Dino Chronique de 1831 à 1864*, p. 5.

request to the Queen,"¹ answered the inflexible little lady.

On September 19th the Queen and the Duchess of Saxe-Weimar drove with the Princess Louise and Lady Bedingfield to Brighton. There they stayed for a couple of nights, and the Queen not only arranged what baths her niece should take, but also took her to the bathing establishment the first day. Here they were most rudely mobbed, and became so alarmed that it was settled that for the future the Princess should take her baths in the sea. The Queen and the Duchess of Saxe-Weimar stayed at Brighton for two nights, and the Duchess left soon afterwards for the Continent and never saw her daughter again. The Queen watched most anxiously over her niece, of whom she received constant accounts from Lady Bedingfield, who was left in charge. She arranged the minutest details of the invalid's life before leaving her, settled when she was to go to bed every night, and sent a dentist from London to attend to her teeth. Unfortunately, soon after the Princess's arrival at Brighton she caught chickenpox. Lady Bedingfield is rather caustic because Lady Sophia Sidney—who does not seem to have been a general favourite—and Lady Taylor, Sir Herbert Taylor's wife, would not come to see Lady Bedingfield or the Princess for fear of infection, but lost their alarm and were assidu-

¹ *Diary of a Lady-in-Waiting*, Lady C. Bury, vol. ii. p. 6.

ous in their visits when the Court moved down to Brighton.

The King and Queen did not leave Brighton till February 22nd, 1832, but meantime much had been happening politically, to which it will be necessary to refer in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XI

The Lords reject the Reform Bill—The Queen considered responsible—Her unpopularity—Lord Howe's resignation—His correspondence with Wellington—Pamphlet in defence of the Queen—Disturbances throughout the country—Insurrection at Bristol—The Third Reform Bill brought forward—Resignation of the Ministry

BACKED by a strong majority, the Reform Bill had now been sent to the House of Lords. On October 8th, 1831, the Lords threw it out by a majority of forty-one. It was therefore evident that the creation of peers was the only expedient which would enable the Bill to pass. However, the King now showed the utmost repugnance to the idea of adding to the Peerage, in fact, was wavering about the question of reform altogether, and this change of mind was attributed by the country at large, led by the Press, to the malign influence of Queen Adelaide.

In an insidious manner, while pretending to defend the Queen, the *Times* was foremost in designating her as one of the principal obstacles to reform. On October 1st, 1831, we read: "Malice and effrontery are still at work libelling the Queen of England, as if she were really beating up for the cause of anti-reform." On October 5th, speaking of the "females "

of William's family being anti-reformers, the *Times* says in a tone of jocose condescension which would enrage the feminists of to-day: "Heaven bless the amiable babblers; we hope they will all live to see the happy effects of that measure to which they fancy themselves averse."

This was before the Lords had thrown out the Bill. Afterwards the *Times* dropped its tone of semi-facetious remonstrance and became frankly hostile to the Queen. "A foreigner is not a very competent judge of English liberties, and politics are not the proper field for female enterprise and exertion," it says severely.

The Queen's Chamberlain, Lord Howe, who voted consistently against the Bill in the House of Lords, was the mark for general execration. He seems to have been extremely injudicious. Sir Herbert Taylor had written to him, some months before the time we speak of, to request him on the King's behalf to regulate his opposition to the Reform Bill so that he might avoid compromising the King and Queen. As only the King, Lord Grey, Sir Herbert Taylor, and Lord Howe knew of the existence of this letter, it was supposed that Lord Grey must have communicated its contents to the *Times*, for that paper, to the intense and natural indignation of Lord Howe, inserted a paragraph in which it represented that Lord Howe had been "rebuked for chattering" ¹ about the Reform Bill.

¹ *Croker Papers*, vol. ii. p. 118.

In his indignation at the tone of the paragraph, Lord Howe threatened to send in his resignation as Queen's Chamberlain. However, the King, who "wept at the situation,"¹ entreated him not to take any step in this embarrassing and extraordinary affair till he had consulted the Duke of Wellington. The Duke was, as usual, prompt and decided. In his opinion resignation would be playing into his enemies' hands. The Queen for her part declared that she was "well aware of the intrigues of the Ministers to get rid of Lord Howe, that she at least would never consent to part with him on such grounds as they alleged; that if His Majesty pleased to dismiss him, she, of course, would submit, but in that case she hoped His Majesty would allow her to do without a Chamberlain altogether, which in these times of economy would hardly be objected to by the Ministers, if she had no objection." The question of Lord Howe's dismissal had now become a trial of strength between the Queen and the Ministry.

"The Queen is made ill by the worry which Ministers are giving her, and the King's inside is much upset by the same annoyances. His wife and sisters are sworn foes to the Government,"² writes Princess Lieven.

In her ignorance of English politics, the Queen seems never to have gauged the seriousness of

¹ *Croker Papers*, vol. ii. p. 119.

² *Letters of Princess Lieven*, Robinson, p. 316.

the situation, and only to have felt indignant that a Ministry of whose politics she did not approve should dare to interfere with her Household. She did not, in fact, attach due importance to the clamour which had risen against her Chamberlain, and through him against herself, for she told a friend that he "had made himself quite miserable about the abuse thrown upon him by the newspapers on account of his not being a reformist,"¹ and seemed astonished at this sensitiveness.

Meanwhile, Lord Howe wrote a letter to the *Times* to defend himself. In this he said that he had asked the King whether he had not better resign as he intended to vote against the Reform Bill, and had received from the King "a distinct recognition of my privilege of being perfectly independent of any Government from the circumstance of my being in Her Majesty's Household."

The position of affairs was, however, untenable, or at least highly detrimental to Queen Adelaide, as both the King and Queen should have realised. There was certainly cause for comment when the King was pledged to a highly popular measure, and this was voted against consistently by one of the principal personages in the Queen's Household. As the *Times* of October 3rd, 1831, remarked: "The Royal Household must be in alliance with the Cabinet, who must call on the

¹ *Jerningham Letters*, vol. ii. p. 342.

AUTOGRAPH LETTER WRITTEN BY QUEEN ADELAIDE.

State servants of Queen Adelaide, beginning, as showing respect to his high office, with Lord Howe, and make them promise to vote with the King and Government, and if they refuse to do this should dismiss them before the Second Reading."

This was what His Majesty's Ministers were longing to do, and the fact that they were not strong enough to insist caused much very unpleasant gossip. It was not enough for the low-class newspapers to announce that the King and Queen were on very bad terms, to talk of Petticoat Ascendancy, and to represent William IV as a weak old man who was bullied by his wife. They went further, and scurrilous caricatures represented Queen Adelaide and Lord Howe as lovers. In one of these, which shows at least a *desire* to believe in the King's good intentions, Lord Howe is kissing the Queen, who leads the King by a string tied round his neck, saying, "Come along, Silly Billy," while the King, who is represented as foolish and despondent-looking, remarks sadly, "Oh, I am a Poor, Weak, Old Man, they know I am not able to do anything."

However, after the Lords had thrown out the Bill, and Lord Howe's name was among those who had voted against it, Lord Grey would brook no further parleying. He went at once to Windsor, and obtained from the King a promise that Lord Howe should resign. This promise was given with much reluctance, and Lord Grey

wrote the same day to the King : “ It was with great pain that Earl Grey found himself under the necessity of urging what might be disagreeable to Her Majesty, but he could not avoid what was essential to the support of your Majesty’s Government under the trying circumstances of the present moment, and he begs your Majesty to accept his humble acknowledgments of your Majesty’s gracious attention to the representation which he felt himself compelled to make on this distressing occasion.”¹

The Queen was extremely indignant at Lord Howe’s dismissal, especially because neither the King nor Lord Grey had warned her of their intentions—a neglect which certainly shows some want of consideration, or perhaps a certain nervousness on the King’s part. She performed her threat of refusing to appoint another Chamberlain, and Lord Howe continued to perform the duties of the office. This naturally excited much comment as an evasion of the spirit of the law. That the Queen did not in the least comprehend the situation is shown by the tone of her conversation to her friends. “ She spoke much of the insult to her of dismissing Lord Howe, but what hurt her most was her fear lest the King might be blamed, for she was sure he would never have done it could he have helped himself.”²

¹ *Correspondence of Earl Grey with William IV*, vol. i. p. 372.

² Clitherow, *Glimpses of King William IV and Queen Adelaide*, pp. 27, 28.

The *Times*, which, with a pertinacity worthy of a better cause, never missed an opportunity of abusing the unfortunate Queen, remarked that she had not surely the right to leave the post vacant, and went on with a fervour flavouring of hypocrisy: "How gladly would the people of England love their Queen! and of how much more value is their love than the sordid and selfish adherence of the sycophants of these silly, flouting displays of feminine petulance."

The view that the King was weak, deluded, and led against his will by his Ministers, which we see represented in the caricatures of the period, was certainly held by Lord Howe. In a letter written to the Duke of Wellington on January 20th, 1832, he says: "I am now going to take a great liberty with you; it is in strict confidence; to show you part of a letter I have just received from the Queen. Of course, she does not know that I have submitted her letter to you; and should you think it *right* to send me a few lines which might be shown to her, and of course to the *unfortunate* master, advert only to what I have said, not what I have shown you. While I say this, pray understand, my dear Duke, that if you have no time nor think it right to send me an answer, merely return the Queen's letter without adding one single line. God knows whether the King is sincere or not, but is it not frightful to see him acting as he does,

while at the same time he detests his agents ? ”
A postscript says : “ I have told the Queen you know her wish to hear your opinion, but that I don’t know whether you will think it prudent to write.” ¹

The enclosed letter from Queen Adelaide runs as follows :

“ MY LORD,

“ I thank you most sincerely for having communicated to me Lady Ely’s letter, which I burnt according to your wish after its perusal. I read it to the King, who was as much pleased with it as I was, and heard with pleasure what she mentioned respecting the R.C. in her neighbourhood having asked her for Bibles. He said, ‘ That’s good.’ I also am glad he had this opportunity of seeing her new plan of education. His eyes are open to see the great difficulties in which he is placed ; he sees everything in the right light, but I am afraid has the fixed idea that no other administration could be formed at present amongst your friends, and thinks they are aware of it themselves. How far he is right or not I cannot pretend to say, for I do not understand these important things, but I should like to know what the Duke of Wellington thinks, for he must be a good judge of this question.”

In his answer to Lord Howe written the same

¹ *Wellington Despatches, Correspondence, and Memoranda*, vol. viii. p. 165.



AUGUSTUS FREDERICK, DUKE OF SUSSEX.
From a portrait by Guy Head, in the National Portrait Gallery.

day, the Duke of Wellington remarked, "As for my part I do not doubt, I never have doubted that if public affairs go on as they are, this country will be lost. . . . I can do no more in Parliament. I can do nothing out of Parliament."

In those days, though Royalty was abused and criticised by the Press in a way that seems astonishing to us now, the King claimed and really possessed a power which has now passed away. His feelings, opinions, and prejudices counted for much, and his support was of enormous importance to the passing of any measure. It is necessary to realise this that we may understand the significance of the fact that Queen Adelaide, whose influence over her husband was undoubtedly great, was communicating with the Duke of Wellington through the instrumentality of Lord Howe. Worse was to follow, for later the Earl of Munster, William's eldest and favourite son, the recipient of his confidences, revealed to the Opposition all that passed between the King and Lord Grey, and assured them that William would never under any circumstances fulfil his pledge of creating peers.

Speaking of the King, the Earl of Munster wrote to the Duke of Wellington: "He said in reference to something I said, 'Why, you know very well, George, as well as I do, that I never will make peers.'"

When we realise these facts, the difficulties

encountered by the Whig Ministry in passing the Reform Bill assume formidable dimensions.

Lord Howe did not certainly mince matters. Speaking of the Whig Ministry, he wrote: "To be ruined and destroyed by such a set of imbeciles as these is enough to break one's heart. Anything that an honest man can do to injure them I will do with pleasure as a sacred duty."¹

Queen Adelaide was in complete agreement with the Bishops, whose united vote had turned the scale against the Reform Bill in the House of Lords, and who were therefore the mark of popular hatred. Their effigies were burnt in most of the cathedral towns, and on several occasions their lives were in danger from the attacks of the populace. The Queen answered an address presented by them in the following words: "I thank you, my Lords, for this address. I trust you will strenuously exert yourselves, as you have hitherto so honourably done, for the preservation of our Church and State. Believe me, that I am heart and soul devoted to your maintenance." The Queen went on to say with much emotion and with expressive gestures, that she had been cruelly and undeservedly insulted and calumniated on many occasions.

The Queen was not altogether without champions. A pamphlet was published in her defence

¹ *Wellington Despatches, Correspondence, and Memoranda*, vol. viii. p. 224.

entitled, "Appeal to the Honest Feelings of Englishmen on Behalf of the Queen of England." Sir Francis Burdett, a Radical, expressed in the House of Commons his indignation "at the insults heaped upon an illustrious lady, whose sex and amiable conduct, since her arrival in England, have given her claims to the respect and protection of all." Lord Winchilsea in the House of Lords was even more violent. "This infidel part of the public press," he said, "not satisfied with assailing their Lordships, had levelled its envenomed slanders against an illustrious female holding the highest rank in society, whose many virtues were the admiration of all classes in society. Would to God that I knew who the vile slanderer was ! "

The Queen's defence was also essayed in a pamphlet entitled "Important Letter from the Queen to the Lord High Chancellor," which appeared in the *Morning Post*, and ran through several editions as a separate pamphlet. This may be found interesting to read.

"MY LORD,

"I should not have deemed it necessary to address you on the subject of the calumnies now circulating against me—under the firm conviction, that the period will soon arrive when a brave and generous nation will do me justice, but having reason to believe that a more extensive and systematic plan is in agitation to

calumniate me, I break through the forms and ceremonies consequent on my exalted station—and appeal at once through you to that tribunal which, however excited, will not refuse to hear the vindication of the meanest subject—I ask no more.

“Born and educated abroad, the first impressions I imbibed were, a love and respect for the people, and duty to my Father and Sovereign, and when our beloved Monarch selected me as his Consort, the dazzle of a prospective Crown had no influence on our Union.

“Subsequently elevated to the throne of England—if I felt proud of my situation, it was the honest pride of a Queen, becoming so closely identified with the British Nation. My Court was not one of favouritism or political intrigue; I considered it my duty to receive without political distinction all parties at my Drawing Rooms, who were entitled to be there, and I appeal to you, my Lord, whether any part of my PUBLIC conduct merited or ever was imagined to be liable to reprehension.

“It is therefore to my private life my enemies would refer. What proof of interference has ever been adduced? The regal state is of itself sufficiently laborious and irksome, not to render those short moments of retirement too valuable and precious to be disturbed by Political Cabal.

“Happy in the domestic circle—the affection and duty I owe my Sovereign and Husband have

always been too paramount and dear to me to allow even in Idea, an interruption to that Peace and Tranquillity so necessary to relieve and soften down the anxieties and cares of Royalty. My detractors have thrown around me a brilliant Influence of their own creation, not reflecting that the inference is no less derogatory to the Crown ; and in endeavouring to lessen me in the estimation of the Nation—have at the same time hurled the envenomed dart at a Beloved and Patriot King.

“ The cloud of prejudice will soon disperse, and although the ordeal of public opinion may be *severe it is at last just*. To that period I look with confidence and serenity.

“ THE QUEEN.”

Meanwhile William shared to a great extent his spouse's unpopularity. The existence and position of the FitzClarences gave a handle for much abuse of him. “ The bye blows of a king ought not to be his bodyguard,” wrote one scurrilous scribbler. “ Can anything be more indecent than the entry of a sovereign into his capital, with one bastard riding before him, and another by the side of his carriage ? The impudence and rapacity of the FitzJordans is unexampled even in the annals of Versailles and Madrid.”¹ The same feeling was shown

¹ *Morning Chronicle*, May 14th, 1832.

a year later, when Frederick FitzClarence was obliged to give up the situation of Keeper of the Tower bestowed on him by the King, because it was believed that the House of Commons would refuse to vote the pay of it.¹

Meanwhile disturbances were taking place throughout the country. At Derby the mob liberated the prisoners in the gaol, at Nottingham they set fire to the Castle, at Liverpool tumultuous meetings were held. The Duke of Wellington was hissed, the windows of Apsley House were broken, the Marquis of Londonderry was stoned, and the Duke of Cumberland, when riding with Queen Adelaide, was dragged from his horse.

It was at Bristol, however, that the most serious disturbances took place. The Recorder, Sir Charles Wetherell, was a strong anti-Reformer with a witty and sarcastic tongue, and the Government were advised not to send him to the town to perform his duties at this time of excitement. On his appearance there was at once insurrection, the windows of the Mansion House were broken, and the lives of the magistrates were in danger.

The 14th Dragoons, who were summoned to quell the rising, remained passive and, fraternising with the mob, refused to clear the streets. Colonel Brereton, who was in command, was apparently in sympathy with his men, and

¹ *Greville Memoirs*, 4th ed. vol. ii. p. 362.

refused to order them to fire upon the people, though the Riot Act had been read three times. Eventually Colonel Brereton ordered the troops to their quarters, and the town was given up to anarchy, the new gaol being attacked, toll-houses consumed, and the Mansion House burnt.

For the army to sympathise with the people betokened serious mischief, and it was evident that there was no alternative to concession or revolution.

On December 8th Lord John Russell brought forward what was known as the Third Reform Bill, a much modified and less rigorous version of its predecessors; and this was passed by a majority of 162.

Parliament reassembled on January 17th, 1832; on the 20th the House went into Committee on the Reform Bill. This passed the House of Commons on Friday, March 23rd, and again made its way to the House of Lords, where it passed the Second Reading by a majority of nine. However, to modify the Bill and to wrest it from the hands of the Whig party, Lord Lyndhurst moved that the disfranchising clauses should not be considered till the enfranchising clauses had been passed, and this motion was carried by a majority of thirty-five.

Knowing the condition of the country, Lord Grey and Lord Brougham went to Windsor, and submitted to the King the alternative of the resignation of the Whig Ministry or the

creation of sufficient peers for the Bill to be passed.

The King, who had now retired from his position as supporter of the Bill, refused to create the peers, and the Ministry resigned.

“All the Royal Family, bastards and all,” writes Charles Greville, “have been perpetually at the King, and he has probably had more trouble in the long run in resisting the constant importunity of his entourage, and of his women-kind particularly, than the dictates of his Ministers; and between this gradual but powerful impression, and his real opinion and fears, he was not sorry to seize the first good opportunity of shaking off the Whigs. When Lord Anglesey went to take leave of him at Windsor he was struck with the change in his sentiments, and told Lady Anglesey so, who repeated it to my brother.”¹

¹ *Greville Memoirs*, ed. 1875, vol. ii.



A TOUCH OF THE PATHETIC.

Queen Adelaide, supported by Cumberland and Wellington, forcing William IV to dismiss Grey and Brougham.

CHAPTER XII

England on the verge of revolution—Threats against the Queen—Scheme imputed to her—The King appeals to the Tories—Passing of the Reform Bill—The King refuses to assent to the Bill in person—Question of Lord Howe's reinstatement in office—Wellington's advice to him—Wellington's refusal to write to the Queen—The relations between Lord Howe and the Queen—Death of the Princess Louise

THE country was now on the verge of Revolution. Birmingham was particularly violent, the inhabitants refusing to pay taxes or to purchase property which might be distrained for their payment. The Common Council of London petitioned the House of Commons to refuse supplies till the Bill was passed, and from Manchester, Birmingham, Leeds, and many other towns in the kingdom similar petitions issued.

Queen Adelaide was as usual held up to obloquy, being stigmatised in the *Morning Chronicle* as "a nasty German frow," and reminded by the reformers of Newcastle of the fate of Marie Antoinette. There seemed indeed to be a certain justification for her fear of a repetition of the French Revolution on English soil. "The King, the Queen, and the Royal Family are libelled, caricatured, lampooned, and balladed by itinerant singers hired for the

purpose, to a degree not credible," writes Croker to a friend. "They are constantly compared to Charles and Henrietta, and to Louis and Antoinette, and menaced with their fate."¹

"From these hustings," cried an orator at Newcastle, "I bid the Queen of England recollect that in consequence of the opposition of the ill-fated woman to the wishes of France, a fairer head than ever graced the shoulders of Adelaide Queen of England rolled upon the scaffold."

This was hardly gallant, to say the least of it, and other orators informed their audiences that Queen Adelaide had by her marriage with the King been raised from "a state not so respectable or affluent as the lady of an English squire, to be the consort of the King of the most enlightened people on the earth."

William had completely lost his popularity, and was merely an object of compassion in the hands of a designing woman. "Pity the poor old King!" was inscribed on one of the black banners displayed at a great meeting in Edinburgh; and O'Connell roused tremendous enthusiasm at an assemblage of the householders at Westminster by remarking that Charles I had been beheaded for listening to the advice of a foreign wife.

When the King and Queen drove from Windsor to London, the people began at Brentford to groan, to hiss, and to throw clots of earth into

¹ *Croker Papers*, vol. ii. p. 182.

the carriage, and when they reached London they were greeted by yells and execrations, during which the King leant back rather out of sight, but the Queen sat forward and faced the people apparently quite unmoved by their hostility.¹ If she were indeed destined to play Marie Antoinette's part, she would at any rate do it with dignity.

It is therefore hardly astonishing that Place should hear from Hobhouse—whom he describes as a man who knew all the Cabinet secrets, though not himself a member of it—that the Queen had with much difficulty persuaded the King to accede to a project for leaving the country clandestinely, and escaping to Hanover. The Royal intentions were discovered, and the design was frustrated. Hobhouse assured Place that this scheme had been actually mooted, and Place remarks, "It was not likely such a plot could succeed; but if it had, the whole Government would have been dissolved in an instant, and a war with the Powers of the continent would probably have been the consequence. England and France would make common cause, against Austria, Russia, and Prussia. The particulars of this cruel, heedless, dishonest project will probably be made public some day. It seemed to me, as it did to him and consequently to other great men, that the intended escape of the King and Queen must have been known

¹ *Morning Chronicle*, May 14th, 1832.

to the Duke of Wellington as a part of the scheme for subjugating the people. It is hardly, however, credible that the Duke could so have mistaken the state of the country and the inevitable result of such an abdication as to have countenanced any such proceedings. Be this as it may, the Duke could not have availed himself of the circumstance to govern the country for a single hour.”¹

It is easier to imagine the Queen and Lord Howe in consultation over the scheme than to credit the Great Duke with knowledge of it. Nevertheless, the state of affairs did seem very black to public men at that time. “The Bill once passed, good-night to the Monarchy,”² said Croker, after a conversation with Wellington. “All my feelings satisfy me that my time is short,” wrote Lord Eldon to the Duke of Wellington. “I am grateful to God that such is the case; being very confident that, if the Bill passes, the Monarchy, and the Peers of the realm, will not, as such, survive me long. I have long been sure that the work of destruction of both has been going on in this country, and I am now sure that it will be, very speedily, fully accomplished.”³

It was now evident that to ensure the safety of the country, the Reform Bill must, without

¹ *Place Papers*, Add. MSS. 27,794, f. 88, Brit. Mus.

² *Croker Papers*, vol. ii. p. 148.

³ *Wellington Despatches, Correspondence, and Memoranda*, vol. viii. p. 343.

further delay, become part of the English Constitution, and great efforts were made to break the solidarity of the resistance to it in the House of Lords. The Bishops were approached one by one. Their united vote had, up to now, carried the day against reform, which they identified with the downfall of the Church; and the fact that the Archbishop of Canterbury now seceded from their number was looked on as an earnest of success.

At this crisis the King had turned to the Tories, in the hope that they would be able to bring in some measure of modest reform. There was not much prospect, however, that the Tories would be able to form a Ministry, and as if to accentuate the fact that the retiring Ministry had the feeling of the country behind them, the House of Commons brought in a vote of confidence in the Whig Government, and carried it by a large majority.

In spite of this strong expression of public opinion, William turned to Lyndhurst, Manners Sutton, and Wellington, in the hope that if the Whigs retired they would be able to form a Ministry pledged to moderate reform. Notwithstanding his hatred of the Bill, Wellington's sense of duty and loyalty caused him to come to the King's assistance and to endeavour to form a Ministry. It was, however, absolutely requisite for this purpose that Peel should join him, and Peel refused, declaring that his name had been

so thoroughly identified with opposition to reform, that he could not sacrifice consistency and appear as the exponent of even the most modest measure in its favour. It was therefore impossible for Wellington to form a Ministry, for Peel, though not generally trusted or liked, possessed extraordinary power in the House of Commons.

The situation was extremely alarming. Arrangements had been made among the Radicals for the formation of a Committee to ensure public safety. No taxes were to be paid, towns were to be barricaded, and provisional governments were to be established. In fact, the Political Unions, which had been formed in most of the large cities in the kingdom, were—ominous symptom!—military in their organisation, and were all prepared to act together in the cause of Parliamentary Reform.¹ It is not exaggeration to say that only Peel's action in refusing to take office saved England from violent revolution. Though Wellington was aware that an anti-Reform Ministry was at this juncture an impossibility, he quite under-estimated the strength of the movement for Reform, and considered that after a certain amount of rioting everything would quiet down.

The possibility of an anti-Reform Ministry could not, however, be contemplated by any sane person. A message now arrived for Grey

¹ *Passing of the Great Reform Bill*, J. R. M. Butler.

from the Bank of England¹ to say that if the news of his retention of office did not reach the public before the mails went out, the depositors in the Savings Banks would withdraw their deposits, that people would, on hearing this, demand gold for paper, and that in four days the banks would be compelled to close their doors. It was apparent that no time must be lost. In fact, during the eleven days in England between the King's acceptance of the resignation of the Whigs, and his promise to enable them to pass the Reform Bill, the country was in full course of revolution.

It was therefore evident that the Whig Ministry must remain in office, and this fact was announced amid general joy and excitement. However, the question of the creation of peers still hung in the balance. The more Radical among the Ministry wished to urge the King to this measure, while the moderate Whigs, Grey among the number, disliked the idea intensely themselves, and while determined at any cost to pass the Reform Bill, wished, if possible, to avoid this infringement of the constitution. Meanwhile, the long time of worry and anxiety was beginning to have an injurious effect on the King, and Queen Adelaide must have noted with anxiety his curiously irrelevant remarks and his frequent fits of excitement.

In a report sent to the King of a meeting of

¹ *Place Papers*, Add. MSS. 27,794, ff. 287, Brit. Mus.

the Cabinet on May 16th, 1832, the alternative to a creation of peers is stated to be "a cessation, on the part of the adversaries of the Bill, of the opposition which has hitherto obstructed its progress."¹ It was by this means that the Reform Bill eventually passed. The Bishops had, as we have already seen, been approached on the matter. The Archbishop of Canterbury had promised to support the Government, and the King now wrote himself to a number of peers entreating them to withdraw their opposition to the Bill.² Wellington, Lyndhurst, and several others promised neutrality, and the King authorised Lord Grey to submit to him a list of peers to be created should the necessity for this course arise. At an audience he granted to Lord Grey and Lord Brougham on May 17th, he wrote, though with ill grace and reluctance:

"The King grants permission to Earl Grey and to his Chancellor Lord Brougham, to create such a number of peers as will be sufficient to ensure the passing of the Reform Bill—first calling peers' eldest sons.

"WINDSOR,

"May 17, 1832."

The same evening Sir Herbert Taylor, the King's private secretary, wrote to some among the more active of the Tory peers, to say that all difficulties would be obviated if a certain

¹ *Correspondence of Earl Grey with William IV*, vol. ii. p. 419.

² *Greville Memoirs*, ed. 1875, vol. ii. p. 303.

number of them would announce their intention of dropping their opposition to the Bill. This letter, of which the Ministers apparently did not know, had a powerful effect. Wellington and about a hundred peers retired from the House that night, and after several scenes of indignation and some slight modifications of the Bill, on June 4th the third reading was carried by a majority of 106 to 22.

The only necessity now was for the King to give formal assent to the Bill. It was hoped that he would do this in person, when he might have recovered a portion of his early popularity. At first he promised to do this, and there was much disappointment when, after arrangements had been made to accord him a popular reception, he retired to Windsor, and assent to the Bill was given by commission.

This was a great mistake, especially as the Queen was blamed, and no doubt justly, for the omission. "This, then, is the point of view in which those who chuse to call themselves the Queen's party would present King William to his affectionate subjects," thundered the *Times*. "They would exhibit him as in his heart an enemy to Reform. Is this madness, or malignity, or treason, or what is it?"

The Queen's intense dislike and fear of the Bill had, if possible, increased, and she fought strenuously against the dissolution of Parliament which was a necessary consequence of its

having become law. In fact, Lord Erroll told Grey and Brougham that she had extorted from the King a promise that rather than allow the dissolution he would turn out the Government. The poor old King did his utmost to fulfil this undertaking. He argued the point with Brougham, declaring that he could not see the necessity for a dissolution, and that he hated the idea of a House filled with Radicals. He insisted on interviewing Lord Grey on the subject, and obtaining no satisfaction from him had again recourse to Brougham. When he was at last obliged to submit to dire necessity, and came up from Brighton to preside at the Council dissolving Parliament, he, to quote from Brougham, "looked sulky; asked me if it was quite necessary; received for answer, 'absolutely, Sir'; and we dissolved, and returned the great, Liberal, and Reformed Parliament."¹

The Bill passed, Lord Grey was anxious to conciliate the Queen, whose favour he was quite aware he had forfeited, by the reinstatement of Lord Howe as her Chamberlain. He therefore wrote to Sir Herbert Taylor in August proposing that Lord Howe should return to his post in the Queen's Household. Sir Herbert conveyed this message to Lord Howe, and the latter, who was extremely indignant with both Lord Grey and Sir Herbert Taylor, wrote to the

¹ *Life and Times of Henry, Lord Brougham, by Himself*, vol. iii. p. 229.

Duke of Wellington before sending his answer, to ask for his advice on four points.

“ Shall I not, by accepting office, allow Lord Grey’s power to appoint and remove the Queen’s servants according to *his* will and pleasure, and admit he was right in dismissing me before ?

“ 2nd. Am I at liberty to vote as I think proper on all political questions ? Without which power nothing should induce me to return.

“ 3rd. May I feel my honour perfectly secure on receiving Lord Grey’s answer to my second question, which I shall require in writing ? ”¹

In his answer written on August 26th, 1832, the Duke of Wellington remarked that Lord Grey had in his letter completely misrepresented Lord Howe’s proceedings. According to the Duke, Lord Howe had never rendered himself “ conspicuous in opposition to the King’s Government.” Wellington argued that while it was necessary that the Ministry should always be sure of the support of the King’s Household, the Queen’s Household, being paid for out of her Majesty’s allowance, came under quite a different category. “ They must be chosen because they are agreeable to their Majesties, and must hold their offices permanently.” If her Majesty’s officers were to be changed with the Ministry, the same course must certainly be adopted about the husbands of the ladies of the

¹ *Wellington Despatches, Correspondence, and Memoranda*, vol. viii. p. 393.

Queen's court, and in saying this the Duke evidently considered that he had carried the argument *ad absurdum*. He considered that Lord Howe should hold no communication on the subject with Lord Grey, that, to quote his words, Lord Howe's "affair was with the King," and that his Majesty should be told that "whether in the office of honour proposed to you or not, you feel that, situated as you are, it does not become you to take a violent course; and that if it is now, as it was heretofore, clearly understood that you were to vote as you think proper, you would take care that the course which you would pursue would not embarrass the King either in his family or with his Ministers."

Wellington wrote also to Lord Aberdeen accusing William IV of duplicity, apparently because while defending Lord Howe he was at the same time agreeing with Lord Grey that Howe's dismissal was necessary. Wellington continues: "I cannot but observe likewise in the same quarter and in his amanuensis [Sir Herbert Taylor] a very strong desire to justify the extravagant conduct of the Minister upon the dismissal, to submit to his pretensions, and to applaud the generosity of his conduct at present." The Duke, however, allows that this step shows for the first time a desire on Lord Grey's part to conciliate the Queen.

The hot-headed Lord Howe could not even



HENRY PETER, FIRST BARON BROUGHAM AND VAUX, IN
CHANCELLOR'S ROBES.

By James Lonsdale.

wait to receive the Duke of Wellington's answer to his letter asking for advice, before writing to Sir Herbert Taylor, and he allows that owing to the "vexation he had undergone, he expressed himself rather strongly." This letter, which denied to Lord Grey the right of interfering with the Queen's Household, was approved by the Queen, and then sent to Sir Herbert Taylor, who was made very angry by its contents.

As Lord Grey himself said, the Queen would never forgive him for the dismissal of her Chamberlain. He had evidently written to Sir Herbert Taylor in the hope of conciliating her, and his letter was, according to Princess Lieven—perhaps from her friendship with Lord Grey not altogether an impartial witness—"quite admirable; it is dignified, full of delicacy, and in perfect taste. I wish I knew for certain that the Queen would read it."¹

It is probable that the Queen saw the letter, but she was evidently not softened by it, and continued to look on the Duke of Wellington as her only champion. She sent by Lord Howe a message to him to the effect that "she never can forget the kindness he had shown her on this and former occasions. No words can express her gratitude to one who has been so truly her friend."

To this the Duke replied through Lord Howe²:

¹ *Correspondence of the Princess Lieven and Earl Grey*, vol. ii. p. 381.

² *Wellington Despatches, Correspondence, and Memoranda*, vol. viii. p. 397.

“If you should have an opportunity, I beg you to tell the Queen that she will ever find me ready to do everything in my power to be of service to her Majesty. I don’t trouble her much with paying my court to her Majesty. It is better. I can be of more use to her by refraining from doing so. But her Majesty may rely upon it that I never will miss an opportunity of being of service to her.”

After Lord Howe had received Wellington’s advisory letter, he had one in reply from Sir Herbert Taylor which showed, in Lord Howe’s emphatic language, that “the astute Secretary and his master Lord Grey were in a towering passion at my insolence.” He then wrote what was apparently a more reasonable letter on the lines prescribed by Wellington, who was anxious, he said, that Lord Howe should not make it impossible for those treating with him to allow him to return to office.

Lord Howe received in answer to this letter one in which Sir Herbert Taylor, acting as the King’s mouthpiece expressed much regard and affection for Lord Howe, and said that he would eagerly “hail the opportunity of proposing to you to resume the situation of Lord Chamberlain to the Queen.” He then states decidedly: “It appears to him [the King] quite inconsistent with reason, or with the regard due by the Sovereign to the credit and security of his Government, that the individuals forming the establishments of the King and Queen respec-

tively, who may be in Parliament, should be authorised to take a course decidedly opposite ; that the King's Household should be required to support his Majesty's Government, while the Queen Consort's should be declared at liberty to place themselves in avowed, active, and determined hostility to it ; that their Majesties' house should set the example of being divided against itself.

“ His Majesty is satisfied that the consequence of admitting such a principle and doctrine must be, as indeed it has proved on this occasion, an impression in the country (happily unfounded) that the Queen Consort is, while living under the same roof, encouraging opposition to the King's Government, and that the Sovereign himself is conniving at proceedings tending seriously to injure that Government, in which he declares that he places his true confidence, and does place his confidence.” ¹

This letter decided Lord Howe not to return to office. In the covering epistle with which he sent Sir Herbert Taylor's letter to Wellington, he remarks : “ I shall remain quiet, rest on my oars, and hope to God I may be yet the humble means of getting rid of this curse and his faction.” Sir Herbert was, he observed, “ a most unfit man ” to hold his important position.

In reply the Duke of Wellington said he was

¹ *Wellington Despatches, Correspondence, and Memoranda*, vol. viii. p. 401.

“convinced that it is found that the administration cannot go on on the extreme principle of exclusion on which it has been formed, as well of persons as of measures of a moderate character.” Later he wrote expressing agreement with Lord Howe on the impossibility of his return to office. He pitied the King and Queen, wished he could see any prospect of change, “and of relief for the King and his family and his subjects from the miserable position in which we are placed.”¹

The Queen made no secret of her feelings. On October 8th, 1832, she remarked to Lord Camden, “Do you remember where you were this day twelve months ago?” When he could not recall what had happened on that date, she answered, “This is the anniversary of the day when you achieved your noble victory in the House of Lords, last year”; and he recollected that it was the anniversary of the defeat of the Reform Bill.

In spite of her supposed want of interference in political affairs, the Queen was most anxious to be put into direct communication with the Duke of Wellington, and to receive his opinion—the opinion of the Leader of the Opposition—as to whether she might venture to hold out in her refusal to allow the appointment of anyone to Lord Howe’s office. The Duke of Wellington was invited to write to her on the subject under

¹ *Wellington Despatches, Correspondence, and Memoranda*, vol. viii. p. 436.

cover to Lord Howe. The position was certainly curious, and gave some handle to possible gossip as connecting her name with that of Lord Howe.

The Duke of Wellington, however, refused consistently to be put into direct communication with the Queen. "I would write to the Queen," he said in a letter to Lord Howe, "with the greatest pleasure if I could be of any service to her Majesty; but as it is not probable that I should be so, I think it best that I should be able to say that I never had addressed her."¹

His advice was that the Queen should defer the appointment of a new Chamberlain as long as she could, and that she should continue to complain that she had not been treated with proper respect, and therefore must decline to appoint a new Chamberlain. "If at last the King, moved thereto by his Ministers or any other circumstance, should insist upon the appointment being made, the case would be the same as one of any other family duress."

Fortunately this case did not arise, and Lord Howe continued to hold—unofficially—the post of Lord Chamberlain.

It seems worth while at this juncture to consider the nature of the relations between Queen Adelaide and Lord Howe. No one can doubt that they were perfectly innocent. Even Charles Greville, who was violently

¹ *Wellington Despatches, Correspondence, and Memoranda*, vol. viii. p. 469.

prejudiced against the Queen—apparently because of her ugliness—after talking to both Lord and Lady Howe, came away convinced “that there is what is called nothing in it but the folly and vanity of being the confidential officer and councillor of this hideous Queen, for whom he has worked himself up into a sort of chivalrous devotion.”¹

Lady Howe was, of course, quite aware of the reports in circulation, and was much distressed at them. She asked Greville whether people “did not say and think everything of Howe’s connection with the Queen” which he said they did. She was “vexed to death at the whole thing,” and was only anxious that all occasion for scandal should be avoided.

Lady Howe was an exceptionally tall, handsome woman, who had been before her marriage a society beauty. She was a woman of strong character, and occasionally showed much eccentricity.

The Queen was very fond of her, but rather scandalised at some of her doings. On one occasion when driving with the Queen, with Lord Howe sitting opposite, she put her feet first on his knees, and then out of the window, her only answer to his distressed signals being to ask, “What do you mean by shaking your head?”² On another occasion at a bazaar

¹ *Greville Memoirs*, ed. 1875, vol. ii. p. 340.

² *Jerningham Letters*, vol. ii. p. 370.

she put her foot on a table to show how well a shoe that was for sale fitted her. Queen Adelaide's presence did not on either of these occasions appear to impose any restraint on her.

Lady Howe was always outspoken, and was very firm in doing what she considered right. She was most strict in her observance of her religious duties, and refused to make any engagement on a Sunday, as she spent that day in seclusion. Once when the King was getting up a party on a Sunday she refused to join it in spite of all his efforts to persuade her to do so. Afterwards the Queen said to her, "I wonder at your resolution. I am sure if the King had been so urgent with me, I could not have refused." Lady Howe replied, "Madam, his Majesty is *your* husband."¹

Lady Howe died at Penn House in 1835 in her thirty-seventh year and left a large family of children, the youngest being only five weeks old. She was certainly in every way a contrast to the gentle, self-controlled Queen Adelaide. Greville was amazed that Lord Howe should have eyes for the plain little Queen when his beautiful, high-spirited wife was present, but there is no doubt that he was touched by the Queen's melancholy and isolated position, and by the patience and cheerfulness she showed to everyone. He was certainly, according to Greville, very injudicious in his behaviour.¹ "Howe

¹ *T. Raikes' Journal*, vol. iii. p. 51.

conducts himself towards her [the Queen] like a young ardent lover; he is never out of the Pavilion, dines there almost every day, or goes every evening, rides with her, never quitting her side, and never takes his eyes off her. She does nothing, but she admits his attentions and acquiesces in his devotion; at the same time there is not the smallest evidence that she treats him as a lover. If she did it would be soon known, for she is surrounded by enemies. All the FitzClarences dislike her, and treat her more or less disrespectfully. She is aware of it, but takes no notice. She is very civil and good-humoured to them all; and as long as they keep within the bounds of decency, and do not break out into actual impertinence, she probably will do so."

It is a sad picture, and the lonely Queen surrounded by hostility and returning good for evil doubtless appealed to Lord Howe's chivalry, while she appreciated and felt gratitude for his devotion.

The King fully shared her affection for Lord Howe, and was evidently determined to show this. After an evening at the Pavilion at Brighton, Princess Lieven writes: "After dinner the King talked to Lord Howe alone, who appears to me to enjoy his Majesty's favour in the highest possible degree." ¹

¹ *Greville Memoirs*, ed. 1875, vol. ii. p. 338.

² *Correspondence of the Princess Lieven and Earl Grey*, vol. ii. p. 418.

The Queen was, evidently, quite unconscious of the gossip about her and her quondam Chamberlain, but there was no doubt much wisdom in Charles Greville's advice to Lord Howe to prevail on her to fill up the vacant office as quickly as possible. In the beginning of 1833, Lord Howe at last "plucked up courage" ¹ to speak to the King and Queen, and Lord Denbigh was inducted into the office, which he held to the end of the Queen's life.

Queen Adelaide told Lady Jerningham that the first time she went in State to the theatre attended by her new Chamberlain, she took Lord Howe also with her, "to show that though she had been obliged to dismiss him, she wished it understood that he had done nothing to displease her." Most probably, too, though this was not recorded, she talked to him a good deal during the intervals, as she and the King had done on an earlier occasion at the theatre, when the fact excited much remark, and was supposed to be of political significance. "I could not help sighing when she told me this," says Lady Jerningham, "for the Queen is so truly good and virtuous that she has not an idea that people should fancy she likes him *too well*." ²

Lord Grey was evidently still uneasy under the idea of having offended the Queen, and his friend Princess Lieven was very anxious to

¹ *Greville Memoirs*, ed. 1875, vol. ii. p. 341.

² *Jerningham Letters*, vol. ii. p. 342.

bring about a good understanding between him and her Majesty. Queen Adelaide has always been credited with taking no interest in politics, but she evidently followed the debates in both Houses very closely, for Princess Lieven wrote after the debate on the Speech from the Throne in 1833, to say that the Queen was much pleased to see what she considered to be a drawing together of the Whigs now in office, and the Tories. "Such a rapprochement," the Queen continued, "was a matter of the utmost importance, and was in every way desirable, for therein lay the greater safety of the State."¹

Peel's address must have pleased the Whigs. He declared that the Speech from the Throne should leave Parliamentary debate untrammelled, and for this reason must not enter into minute details, and expressed a willingness to consider reform in the Church if accompanied with "a due regard for its security." On the other hand, according to Princess Lieven, the Queen praised highly Lord Grey's two speeches, about which she had heard from a Tory. Lord Grey was indeed receding from the position of a reformer. The Radical tendencies of his son-in-law, Lord Durham, alarmed him, and his unpopularity with both King and Queen seems to have weighed heavily on him.

It is interesting to judge of Queen Adelaide's

¹ *Correspondence of the Princess Lieven and Earl Grey*, vol. ii. p. 442.

opinions by the contents of the speeches she commended or disliked. In the one by Lord Grey approved by her, he deprecated any violent movement for Church reform, expressed his opinion that the Established Church had never been as respectable as at the present time, and said that reform would only be contemplated by him if it would render its security more certain.

These sentiments were doubtless most welcome to the Queen, and must have reassured her as to one aspect of Lord Grey's views. Though he had not scrupled to do his best to destroy the State, he at least hesitated to lay impious hands on the organisation of the Church.

In addition to public anxieties connected with alarm at the King's mental condition, to distress at the load of calumny she had to bear, and to terrible presentiments about the effect of a measure which would, she thought, bring England to ruin, the year 1832 brought with it a great personal sorrow to Queen Adelaide.

Though the invalid Princess Louise had caught chickenpox at Brighton, she had seemed at first to be profiting from the sea air and the baths. The Queen was extremely fond of the Princess, and always came forward to meet her with a smiling face of welcome when she appeared in her wheel chair at the drawing-room door. In her letters to her friend Lady Wellesley

we come across constant references to the Princess's health. "Louise is going on well." "I found Louise improved and very cheerful and happy."¹

However, the improvement was only temporary. In spite of all the care taken of her, the Princess began to grow steadily worse. The Queen nursed the poor child during her last illness with the most motherly affection. She wrote to the Princess Augusta saying that "she had been very unwell from anxiety about the Princess whose mother was not able to come to England," but she added, "My comfort and consolation is the extreme kindness of the King. Nothing can exceed it."²

The Princess died in August, 1832, and was buried in the Chapel at Windsor. "We have not seen our dear, amiable Queen since the Ascot week; and, poor thing, she has gone through a great deal, but her conduct through the whole was beautiful," writes Miss Clitherow. "Princess Augusta gave us the account of the closing scene, and, with tears in her eyes, described the feeling and resignation of the Queen, and the extreme kindness and attention of the King to all her little wishes at the time of the funeral, which, by all accounts, was the best managed and most affecting thing possible. She has very much recovered her spirits, which

¹ MSS. Brit. Mus. 37,414, ff. 64-163.

² Clitherow, *Glimpses of William IV and Queen Adelaide*, p. 27.

are naturally very cheerful, but she is still most miserably thin.”¹

The Queen herself wrote to Lady Wellesley that she “had to struggle against the impressions that her niece’s long illness and suffering” made on her.²

¹ *Glimpses of King William IV and Queen Adelaide*, p. 35.

² MSS. Brit. Mus. 37,414, ff. 64-163.

CHAPTER XIII

The Queen visits the Duchesse d'Angoulême—Her relations with the Duchess of Kent and with Lord and Lady Grey—Festivities at Windsor for her birthday—The Queen of Portugal visits the King and Queen—The Duchesse de Dino's opinion of the Queen—The King's mental condition—Dinner given by the Duchess of Kent—Projected visit to Meiningen—Musical festival at Westminster Abbey—The Queen leaves England—Arrives in Meiningen—Festivities there—The Queen returns to England

ABOUT this time the Duchesse d'Angoulême and Charles X passed through London on their way from Holyrood where they had been given asylum by the English Government to Austria, and the Queen paid a visit to the Duchesse d'Angoulême. The English Government was criticised for want of cordiality to the fallen Royal Family. The fact that Charles X crossed in an ordinary trading-boat to Hamburg and the Dauphine travelled in a passenger-boat to Rotterdam because the Government were late in their arrangements for providing anything else, excited comment, and hurt the Duchesse d'Angoulême's feelings. She was therefore all the more grateful for the Queen's visit, and Queen Adelaide must indeed have felt much pity and sympathy for one whose views she

shared to a great extent, and whose fate she must have conceived as likely to be her own.

In the spring of 1833 the Duchess of Kent's two nephews, the Princes of Würtemberg, the elder of whom afterwards married the Queen of Portugal, came to England to pay their aunt a visit, and were present at a juvenile ball given at St. James's Palace.¹

The Princess Victoria was also at the ball. She was seldom allowed by her mother to see the Queen, but on this occasion she sat beside her between the dances, and seemed, Queen Adelaide noted with pleasure, to retain her old affection for her. The Duchess of Kent was, however, absolutely unapproachable. The Queen observed to her that as she could not run about the room to find the Princes, she would like the Duchess to present them to her. This the Duchess refused to do, and though, as the Queen remarked, the young Princess often sat up very late at the Opera, she took her away from the ball quite early, and insisted that her nephews should leave at the same time. The Queen begged that they might be allowed to stay, but though they were tall, sturdy youths, the Duchess said they were tired by a review they had witnessed.

Wishing to be agreeable to the young men, the King and Queen now invited them to spend

¹ *Jerningham Letters*, vol. ii, p. 367.

a few days at Windsor that they might see the Castle. However, either because she feared for them the contamination of coming into contact with the FitzClarence family, or merely because she wished to be disagreeable, the Duchess of Kent refused the invitation, saying that she could not spare them or manage to come with them, and that they had already paid their respects to the King at the Drawing-room. The Queen was very indignant at this response, and determined to ask the King what answer she had better send to the Duchess. However, when she heard that the King was closeted with Lord Grey she sent for Sir Herbert Taylor, and begged him to give the Duchess's note to the King. Sir Herbert Taylor, judicious as ever, said the Queen ought to see the King herself about the matter. Being anxious to bring about a good understanding between her and Lord Grey, he went in first and announced that the Queen wished to have the Prime Minister's opinion on the Duchess's note.¹ When it was read to the King, he said carelessly: "Well, let them stay away if they do not choose to come, and say I hope to see them another time."

The Queen and Lord Grey, however, were resolved that no second invitation should be sent, and a note was despatched regretting that the Princes could not manage to come to see what interested every stranger who came to

¹ *Jerningham Letters*, vol. ii. p. 369.



WILLIAM IV.

From a drawing by Sir George Hayter, in the National Portrait Gallery.

England. The Queen discovered by looking in the newspapers that the day they could not come to Windsor their only engagement was to go to the Zoological Gardens, and this fact did not decrease her annoyance. One wonders what the two young men thought of the matter, whether they were told by their autocratic aunt of the invitation to Windsor, and whether they felt, as her own daughters did, as though in prison when under her charge.

When the Queen discussed this incident with Lady Bedingfield, she seemed naïvely struck by the fact that Lord Grey was quite evidently pleased to be of the same opinion as herself, and Lady Bedingfield answered that he was doubtless sorry for his behaviour in insisting on Lord Howe's retirement. The Queen answered that he should then have apologised for it. However, it is fair to the Queen to add that though she did not forgive Lord Grey for having, she considered, insulted her, she never showed her resentment in her manner, but during the whole affair was always cordial and pleasant to him—a fact he several times notes in his letters.

To Lady Grey she was not so agreeable. The Greys had just come from Windsor Castle, writes the lively Creevey.¹ “Lady Grey, in her own distressed manner, said she was really more dead than alive. She said all the boring she had ever endured before was literally nothing compared

¹ *Creevey Papers*, vol. ii. p. 262.

with her misery of the two preceding nights. She hoped she should never see a mahogany table again, she was so tired with the one that the Queen and the King, the Duchess of Gloucester, Princess Augusta, Madame Lieven and herself had sat round for hours—the Queen knitting or netting a purse—the King sleeping, and occasionally waking for the purpose of saying, ‘Exactly so, ma’am,’ and then sleeping again. The Queen was cold as ice to Lady Grey, till the moment she came away, when she could afford to be a little civil at getting quit of her. . . .”

Scandal was still busy about the King, whose moral record since his marriage had been immaculate, and the Queen felt obliged to keep as maid-of-honour a very unpolished and singularly disagreeable girl, because she was supposed to have had a child by the King. She told the Queen of this scurrilous rumour, and begged to be allowed to remain in attendance to contradict it. To this request the Queen consented, though when once the girl had stayed long enough for her reputation to be re-established she was only too anxious to be rid of her.

This girl, who was nicknamed Caddy by the Court, must have been a most embarrassing person to deal with. She knew so little of good manners that if a lady-in-waiting left her chair and book for a moment Caddy would take possession of them without apology; and when the Queen called up anyone for a private talk,

Caddy would come near and try to listen to the conversation.

In one of Miss Clitherow's letters written in 1833, we hear of a fête which was given on the Queen's birthday on August 13th.¹ "The cottage where George IV lived so much has been pulled down, except a banqueting-room, the conservatory, and a few small rooms for the gardener. Here the preparations were made for a morning fête on the Queen's birthday, and as a surprise to her, the magnificent Burmese tents, which she had never seen, were put up. I never saw anything prettier than the whole scene, and the day was lovely. The tents were the most brilliant scarlet ornamented with gold and silver. The hangings, sofas, and seats were all of Eastern splendour, and at the end was a large glass. The company was very select, and the morning dresses becoming and elegant. Two bands of music (Guards) played alternately. A guard of honour and numbers of officers were present. Everybody seemed gay, and in their best fashion. The King and Queen, with about forty guests, dined in the room, about as many more in a long canvas room. The tables had fruit, flowers, ornaments, confectionery, a few pyramids of cold tongue, ham, chicken, and raised pies. Then you had handed to you soups, fish, turtle, venison, and every sort of meat. Toasts were given, cannons fired, and both

¹ Clitherow, *Glimpses of William IV and Queen Adelaide*, p. 39.

bands united in the appropriate national airs. Altogether it was a sort of enchantment. At seven, fifteen of the King's carriages and many private carriages took the party to the Castle to dress for an evening assembly, where about two hundred were asked."

The festivities for the King's birthday on August 21st were given at Windsor Castle, and on this occasion the company was far from select, and there was a tremendous crowd. The Queen, who was dressed much more magnificently than usual, behaved with much dignity and spent all the evening sitting with the Royal Princesses her sisters-in-law.

In September 1833 Donna Maria, the young Queen of Portugal, paid a visit to the King and Queen at Windsor. She had ascended the throne in 1826, when she was seven years old, at the death of her grandfather, John VI; her father, Dom Pedro, who had become Emperor of Brazil, being precluded by the constitution of that country from assuming the crown of Portugal. England had favoured the accession of Donna Maria as the representative of liberal principles, her uncle, Dom Miguel, who disputed her claim to the throne, being the exponent of an absolutist policy. An attempt was made by Donna Maria's father to arrange matters by marrying her to Dom Miguel, and he was betrothed to his niece and became Regent. He then seized the throne and annulled the Constitution.

Dom Pedro, who had relinquished the throne of Brazil, was now fighting for the rights of his exiled daughter. William IV was sympathetically interested in the young Queen, whose education Dom Pedro had begged Queen Adelaide to undertake. This she refused to do, saying she did not think that a Protestant Queen could educate a Catholic one.¹ She did, however, take a certain interest in Donna Maria, who had paid a visit to England in 1829, for an autograph letter of that date is extant from Queen Adelaide to a German lady asking her to undertake the Princess of Portugal's education.²

In 1829 the Princess of Portugal had been a pretty child. From what Lady Bedingfield writes, she had not improved in looks during the four years which had elapsed since her last visit to England. "The young Queen is only fourteen, but as tall as her mother-in-law" [her stepmother, the ex-Empress of Brazil, who was apparently very pretty, and had charming manners] "and much stouter. Her features are small and childish; fat cheeks squeezing up her mouth; no expression whatever, no colour, and not fair, though with light eyes and hair."³ She was apparently in much need of tuition; for when she lost her shyness she made fun of people, pulled the Princess Augusta about, was

¹ *Letters of Princess Lieven*, edit. Robinson, p. 311.

² In the possession of Mr. Daniel, autograph dealer, King Street, St. James's.

³ *Jerningham Letters*, vol. ii. p. 381.

uncouth, and behaved like "a Princess from the Sandwich Islands." Before the young Queen's arrival Queen Adelaide had alarmed Prince George of Cambridge by saying he had been chosen to be Prince Consort of Portugal, and that the young Queen would take him away as her husband. Prince George became quite alarmed at the idea that this might be true, and he be borne away unwillingly from England.

The Queen of Portugal and her stepmother were received with due ceremony. William IV, followed by all his gentlemen, went to the hall door to meet them, while the Queen, attended by Lady Mayo, stood at the top of the staircase with her ladies ranged beneath her. Guards were stationed in the park; and in the courtyard a regiment of footguards had been placed with their band.

At last the carriages were heard approaching, and Prince George rushed in from his ride in great excitement, with the news that the Queen had arrived. The King, giving Donna Maria and the ex-Empress of Brazil each an arm, conducted them up the staircase to the Queen, who kissed them both and put Donna Maria's arm within hers. The King escorted the ex-Empress; and they went to the great drawing-room, where everyone was presented to them by name.

There was considerable embarrassment about dinner, which was to be as usual at seven

o'clock. The Queen was ready in her private drawing-room by that time, and after waiting a long while she sent Lord Denbigh to ask whether the Royal ladies had completed their toilettes, as she intended to conduct them downstairs herself. The answer came back that they were not ready, and another half-hour having passed, the Queen said she would go to their rooms and see what was the matter. So she, the Princess Augusta, the six ladies in attendance, and the Lord Chamberlain all started in procession, the Queen, with her usual thoughtfulness, trying to give her guests extra time by lingering in the corridor and making remarks about the busts and pictures. It appeared that the delay was caused by a misadventure which has been known to occur in humbler establishments, but which seems out of place in a palace—the luggage had been late in arriving and the ladies could not dress for dinner.

The King remarked next morning at breakfast that he had never seen a more uninteresting girl than Donna Maria. Little Prince George, determined to show that his sentiments did not incline him to become Prince Consort of Portugal, said she looked like an immense doll; and Queen Adelaide alone found something nice to say about her, remarking that her features were regular and she thought she would improve. The Royal visitors were entertained most con-

scientiously, being conducted to Virginia Water, Windsor Church, and the Round Tower. They left for Portsmouth on September 13th, having been three days at Windsor, and it was noted that when they got into the carriage they both had tears in their eyes.

The Queen was thoroughly tired out by their visit, and though she was as usual cheerful and lively, she complained of having rheumatism in her side, which affected her breathing. Her doctor sent her to bed, and she slept for fifteen hours and awoke much revived. Her health was very bad at this time, she had a constant cough, and suffered a good deal from the long annual sojourns at Brighton, where the climate did not suit her.

Talleyrand also visited the Castle, though he was not a welcome guest. The charming and clever Duchesse de Dino was, however, a favourite with the Queen, for whom she had intense admiration, as will be shown by the following extract from her Memoirs¹:

“It is impossible, each time one has the honour of seeing this Princess [Queen Adelaide], not to be struck by the perfect simplicity, truth and straightforwardness of her mind. I have rarely seen anyone in whom the feeling of duty has more power, or who seems in all she says and does, more consistent. She is gay, kindly, and though she lacks beauty, she is most graceful;

¹ *Dino Chronique de 1831 à 1835*, p. 49.

the tone of her voice is unfortunately nasal, but there is so much sense and real goodness in what she says that one listens to her with pleasure. The satisfaction she feels in speaking German is very natural, and I am touched by it, though I wish she would show this less in the presence of English people ; I should like, in the interests of the position she holds, that she should be rather more English, it would be impossible for anyone to be more German than she is ; and I am afraid this may sometimes be used as a reproach against her. What is not used as a reproach against Sovereigns nowadays ? Responsible for everything, they are continually assailed with accusations, well or ill founded. The poor Queen has already felt the bitterness of unpopularity, and of calumny. She has shown much valour, dignity, and I am convinced she has plenty of courage for meeting danger."

In 1834 the King settled that after all the worry and anxiety she had gone through, it would be beneficial to the Queen's health to pay a visit to her native land. Therefore without telling her about his intentions, he began to make arrangements for her journey, and chose her suite, her servants, and her carriages. In May the secret was revealed to her, and she was much agitated and at the time delighted at the prospect, being doubtful whether joy at the prospect of seeing her mother, now old and

infirm, outweighed her anxiety at leaving the King for six weeks. All those really interested in the King, however, were very much disquieted at the idea of the Queen's departure. William IV was at this time in a peculiar state of mind; "was subject to strange fits of passion, had extraordinary fancies, and was sometimes in such a bizarre state of excitement that his mental equilibrium seemed likely to be altogether overturned. The Queen, with quiet attention and extreme good sense, watches over him in these times of crisis, shortens the length of them, moderates his excitement, calms him and makes him behave in an ordinary manner."¹

At this time his condition was arousing much anxiety, and the Queen was naturally very anxious at the idea of leaving him. It was, indeed, thought by the Duchesse de Dino that if his peculiar mental condition were to last till July, when it was planned that she should start, she would in all probability disobey him and remain in England.

Before the Queen went abroad, she was present at a dinner party given by the Duchess of Kent to the Royal Family and a few grandees and foreign diplomatists. The entertainment does not appear to have been successful from the point of view of the guests' enjoyment. The hostess was never distinguished by charm of manner; and on this occasion, considering

¹ *Dino Chronique de 1831 à 1835*, p. 56.

herself among enemies, she was especially stiff and constrained.

The dinner was very long, the scent of flowers made the atmosphere heavy, and the room was so hot that at dessert the Queen begged the Duchess of Kent, if she had finished eating, to allow the ladies to leave the table. The King, who was generally in a bad temper when in the company of his sister-in-law, tried to make himself disagreeable by pretending that he could not hear a word of what her brother, Duke Ferdinand of Saxe-Coburg, was saying. This Prince, who was shy, ugly, and ill at ease, had offended the King by his tardiness in asking to be presented to him.

After dinner matters were no better, for the drawing-room chairs had been placed in a position which rendered conversation impossible, and the only person who, according to the Duchess de Dino,¹ was in the least happy was the Duke of Somerset, who spent the whole time after dinner sleeping behind a pillar. Fortunately for himself, the Duke of Cumberland had not been invited to this entertainment, because on his return from Berlin he had omitted to pay his respects to his sister-in-law.

This party is evidently not a fair sample of English entertainment, for when, a little later than this, Prince Lieven, the Russian Ambassador, was recalled to his native country,

¹ *Dino Chronique de 1831 à 1835*, p. 56.

his brilliant wife was in despair at leaving the delights of English society of which she was a leader. Princess Lieven, as head of the patronesses at Almack's, had shown marked discourtesy to Queen Adelaide, when, as Duchess of Clarence, she attended a ball there, and, the Duke of York being still alive, was a person of comparatively little importance. She one day after William IV's accession reminded Princess Lieven of this, and the latter was much embarrassed. However, the Queen, who had already merited the epithet of "most delightful" from the Princess, completely forgot her resentment, and was most kind and sympathetic when the Russian Ambassadors came in the utmost grief to take leave of her.

Before the end of June 1834 the Duke of Saxe-Meiningen came to England that he might act as the Queen's escort during her stay in Germany. The King was still unwell, and after being extremely anxious for the Queen's departure he became quite miserable at the idea of parting from her. "I cannot describe to you, madame," he said to Princess Lieven, "all the ways in which the Queen is useful to me."¹

It was in vain, however, that she implored him to allow her to remain in England. He answered that altering anything now would give rise to awkward conjectures. He cried despair-

¹ *Dino Chronique de 1831 à 1835*, p. 144.



SILHOUETTE OF QUEEN ADELAIDE.
In the possession of the Earl of Munster.

ingly that he was "tired to death by those people," meaning his Ministry, and that if they were to fall, which he seemed to think a probable and desirable contingency, it would be well for the Queen to be away that people might not say she had influenced him.

The Queen, for her part, seems to have felt real reluctance to leave her husband. A musical festival was taking place in Westminster Abbey, which all the Court attended in state. It lasted four days, and four hours each day the Queen, who was devoted to music, spent in the Cathedral. She told the Duchesse de Dino that during that time she had had more leisure for undisturbed reflection than was usual in her busy life, and that she had made several discoveries.¹ She perceived, for instance, that she was fonder of the King than she was perhaps aware of, and that she was also more necessary to him than she had realised. In fact, she said that she understood at last that her real and only country now was England. All this made her departure peculiarly painful to her, but she was, on the other hand, much consoled by the thought that the King would be all the more disposed to favour a change of Ministry if he were not afraid of being suspected of yielding to her influence.

Great preparations had been made for the Queen's departure. Greville cannot forego a gibe at these. "She will return to her beggarly

¹ *Dino Chronique de 1831 à 1835*, p. 151.

country in somewhat different trim from that in which she left it,"¹ he says sarcastically.

She left St. James's Palace on July 5th, 1834, attended by the Duke of Saxe-Meiningen, the Earl and Countess of Denbigh, the Earl and Countess of Erroll, Earl and Countess Howe, Earl and Countess Brownlow, and Frederick FitzClarence. Among her maids-of-honour was the beautiful Emily Bagot. The Queen crossed the Channel in the yacht *Royal George*, which was escorted by two steamers and by the whole flotilla of the Yacht Club. The Mayor went on board the Royal yacht at the Tower, and accompanied the Queen as far as Gravesend.

Once on the Continent the Queen called herself the Countess of Lancaster, and was supposed to travel incognito. She was met at Rotterdam by the Princess and Princess Frederick of Holland and by the Duchess of Saxe-Weimar and the Prince of Orange. Her journey through Saxe-Meiningen is described as a triumphal progress. At Leimbach decorated obelisks had been erected, and villages had sent their choirs to sing verses in honour of her return to her native country, while the President of the Government welcomed her in stately language. Preceded by 200 of the inhabitants, by the forest officials, and by a regiment of Jagers in their picturesque costumes, the carriages containing the Royal party and their attendants proceeded to Salzungen.

¹ *Greville Memoirs*, ed. 1875, vol. iii. p. 99.

As they entered the town, cannons were fired, church bells sounded, and the streets through which they passed were decorated with garlands of flowers and festoons of foliage. The road on each side of the way was crowded with cheering people, and girls in white dresses wearing scarfs of national colours sprinkled flowers in front of the Queen's carriage.

In the middle of the market-place a beautiful arch had been erected, and music had been provided by the town council and the Court officials. Here the Queen was presented with an address by Superintendent Sachs, for which she thanked him gracefully. She bowed smilingly on all sides, noticed an old servant whom she had known in her youth at Altenstein, and beckoned him to the carriage that she might speak to him. She made her progress out of the town accompanied by cheers, girls in national costume spread flowers before her carriage, and everything testified to the heartfelt joy which her country-people felt at seeing her again.

Between Gumpelstadt and Altenstein she was met by the Duke and Duchess of Saxe-Meiningen, and where the road branched off to Altenstein a triumphal arch had been erected by the inhabitants of two villages, and the pastor of one of them made her a complimentary address.

At last, tired but happy, the Queen arrived at

Altenstein, where she found her mother. The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge were also there, and Queen Adelaide was surrounded by her relations. There were many festivities. On July 31st an expedition was made to an illuminated grotto in which the Royal party was entertained by songs, and the Queen went in a little boat to a temple, where a marble bust of the late Duke George had been placed.

Another day the Queen paid a visit to the town of Meiningen, and was received with the utmost enthusiasm. The young ladies of the place were, as usual, much to the fore with songs, flowers, and poems. The school children, the town council, and pastors from the different parishes presented addresses, while prominent among the crowd was the lately formed guard with its new and beautiful colours. Queen Adelaide drove through the town in a carriage with her brother and with the Duke and Princess of Carolath. In the courtyard of the Castle she was received by the ducal household, while the Guards played military music during the middle-day dinner.

In the evening the town council gave a dinner in the fortress in the Queen's honour. There was much gaiety at this entertainment, songs were sung, complimentary speeches made, and the Royal party did not leave for Altenstein till nine in the evening.

In August the Queen gave a grand ball at

Altenstein. The ball-room, which was built for the occasion, was decorated by English colours, and English weapons had been sent over to adorn the walls.

The Dowager Duchess's and Queen Adelaide's birthdays were kept with similar festivities; in fact, in their desire to do honour to Queen Adelaide, her family seem to have left her very little time for rest.

On August 14th Queen Adelaide left Saxe-Meiningen, after bestowing 200 ducats on the town for defraying the expense of erecting a new building for the Girls' School.

On the way home, she stopped at Hanover to receive a loyal address from the magistrates. In her reply, she thanked them for their interest in her pleasure at seeing her mother, and said: "I am still animated by the hope of soon seeing myself among you again with my beloved King and revered Consort at my side."

At Mentz the Queen embarked in the Royal yacht, and started on her journey down the Rhine. Lord Adolphus FitzClarence, who was in command of the yacht, does not appear to have been a very expert sailor, for he lost his way, and the yacht drew too much water for the depth of the river. Fortunately, however, the Duke and Duchess of Saxe-Weimar and the Prince and Princess of Holland had come up the river to meet the Queen, and she went on board their yacht and was taken to the Hague;

her suite meanwhile finding the greatest difficulty in making their way to Rotterdam. The Queen eventually arrived at Woolwich on August 20th. Thence she drove to St. James's Palace, and next day to Windsor.

CHAPTER XIV

The Queen's delicate health—Politics—Dismissal of Whig Ministry—Queen considered responsible—Her unpopularity—Reports about her—Buckingham Palace—The Duchess of Kent—Scene at Windsor—The FitzClarences—Death of Lady de l'Isle and Dudley—Queen's illness—Illness and death of William IV.

THE immediate effect of Queen Adelaide's visit to Germany was not beneficial to her physically. Continual receptions and ceremonies, days which began at six in the morning and did not finish till twelve at night, had proved too strenuous for her delicate health, and on September 4th, 1834, when she ought to have received a congratulatory address from the City, she was too ill to appear, and the King was obliged to attend the function without her.

However, the visit to Saxe-Meiningen had, except for this drawback, been a success. The Queen writes to her friend Lady Wellesley on September 3rd, 1834: "I passed a very happy time with my dear relations, but it seems now but a Dream, for it passed so quickly, that nothing but the agreeable recollection remains which will long benefit me."¹ She was never-

¹ Brit. Mus. MSS. Room, 37,414, ff. 64-163.

theless very glad to be back with the King, whom she found in excellent health. According to the Duchesse de Dino, he had during her absence been surrounded by relations, "who have neither sense nor consistency, who do not agree among themselves, and whose influence cannot be counted on either for one side or the other."

Politically, the Queen was not pleased with the state of affairs on her return. The expected change of Ministry had not taken place, and she was much disgusted to find the Whigs still in power. "The Queen," writes Princess Lieven from St. Petersburg, "appears somewhat put out by the state of affairs she found when she got home to England."¹

Grey, now an old man, had retired for some time from the Premiership, and Melbourne had taken his place. Dissensions about the Irish question had occurred among the Cabinet, and the King was known to have a special dislike for Brougham. The Whig Ministry was, however, supposed to be standing firm, and the whole country was electrified when, directly after Lord Spencer's death on November 13th, it was suddenly discarded by the King.

"It is long since a Government has been so summarily dismissed—regularly kicked out, in

¹ *Correspondence of the Princess Lieven and Earl Grey*, vol. iii. p. 35.

the simplest sense of that phrase,"¹ wrote Charles Greville.

Subsequent knowledge modified the first impression. It proved that Melbourne had had several conversations with the King in which he had told him that as Lord Althorp, who had been Leader of the House of Commons, would now move to the House of Lords, and no help could be expected from the Conservatives, certain concessions to the Radicals would be necessary. To these the King objected, and said, therefore, that he would entrust the Government to other hands.

Melbourne received the letter from the King formally dismissing him and his colleagues rather late in the day, told no one but Brougham of its existence, and did this under seal of secrecy. However, Brougham, who was not remarkable for trustworthiness, and to whom the fall from power was a terrible blow, went at once in a state of intense indignation to the *Times* office to tell the editor what had occurred. Next day (November 15th, 1834) the following paragraph appeared in the *Times*, and was the first intimation to nearly all the members of the Cabinet that they had been ousted from office: "The King has taken the opportunity of Lord Spencer's death to turn out the Ministry; and there is every reason to believe that the Duke of Wellington has been sent for. The Queen has done it all."

¹ *Greville Memoirs*, ed., 1875, vol. iii. p. 144.

Here was sensation with a vengeance, an Aunt Sally to be stoned, a dog with a bad name to be hung, the villain of the play to be consigned to perdition. This "temporary obstacle in the path of a first attempt to apply to Great Britain the principles and practice of a Government directly influenced by the people," as the *Times* termed it, had been placed there by a narrow-minded little German Princess, whose bedroom in her native "dog-hole" of a Castle was, according to the spiteful Lord Erroll, "a hole that an English housemaid would think it an hardship to sleep in,"¹ who was reactionary, domineering, an enemy to the people, and in damning addition was very ugly, and spoke English with a strong German accent.

It was in vain that the *Times*, having done the mischief, remarked two days later in grandiloquent and condescending apology: "Having without examination and under the excitement of such extraordinary intelligence published a statement which seemed to bear hardly on Her Majesty, we have sincere pleasure in giving it this contradiction, and in declaring our belief that the Queen is not capable of any underhand intermeddling with public affairs or of attempting what we are sure"—this is hardly generous—"she could not accomplish."²

Who would believe this after the delightfully

¹ *Greville Memoirs*, ed. 1875, vol. iii. p. 125.

² *Times*, November 17th, 1834.

exciting previous assertion? Who trusts an official denial? Who listens to an apology into which a highminded and patriotic editor is evidently coerced by the powers that be? The Press at any rate did not, for in the *Sun* of November 18th is the following bitter comment: "The King can do no wrong—that is our doctrine; and therefore he was quite right in regarding Lord Melbourne as a person who could not be treated with too much injustice. Respecting the Queen, it is not necessary to say a single word. She, of course, is innocent of all intermeddling; and if she were not, how could her conduct be impugned? The King can do no wrong, the King and Queen are man and wife, man and wife are one flesh; ergo the Queen must always be in the right."

It is certainly difficult to believe in Queen Adelaide's innocence, in spite of the fact that Miss Clitherow remarks: "It is very sad, they will not let the dear Queen alone. I believe from my heart she has no more to do with it than you or I. Mrs. Clitherow sat half an hour with her at St. James's and she, who is truth itself, declared the first she knew of it was the King coming to her room and telling her the Duke of Wellington was to dine with them, for there was going to be a change of Ministers."¹

We are so far in agreement with Miss Clitherow

¹ Clitherow, *Glimpses of King William IV and Queen Adelaide*, ed. White, p. 56.

that we are perfectly certain of Queen Adelaide's absolute truthfulness, but who shall limit the extent of conjugal influence if the feeling prompting it be strong? It is the fashion now to dismiss Queen Adelaide as a nonentity; but Princess Lieven, a remarkably clever woman who had lived several years in England, thought otherwise. "I do not imagine," she wrote from St. Petersburg, "the King will take Lord Durham as Premier, unless he really feels that the knife is at his throat; and even then there is the Queen to reckon with."¹

The King's children, at any rate, credited the Queen with being the determining factor in the course of events. Lady Sophia Sidney indeed—her father's favourite daughter—was a staunch and consistent Tory; but some of the others had become alarmed at the unpopularity in which they had been involved by their real or supposed opposition to the Reform Bill. Lord Munster had already declared publicly that he was not hostile to it, and Lord Erroll and Colonel Fox were strong in their Whig proclivities. This crisis gave them opportunity for showing their convictions, and they hastened to avail themselves of it in what seems to have been a very unjustifiable manner.

Miss Clitherow writes: "She [the Queen] regretted extremely that the King's children,

¹ *Correspondence of the Princess Lieven and Earl Grey*, vol. iii. p. 52.

instead of rallying round the throne, were the first to send in their resignations and to show such strong opposition to their father's wishes. And we do hear from every quarter their conduct is abominable, and the manner in which they speak of the Queen unpardonable. Lord Erroll went on so bad in a public coffee-house that a gentleman cried out, Shame ! Shame ! As far as we have ever seen, she has shown them nothing but kindness, and their return is ingratitude. Poor Soul ! her cough continues to wear her sadly, and she is hardly stout enough to contend with all her annoyances, notwithstanding the support of a clear conscience." ¹

It was now generally reported that the Queen was about to become a mother. "If it be true," says Greville, "and a queer thing if it is, it will hardly come to anything at her age, and with her health ; but what a difference it would make !" ²

One well-informed person seems to have disbelieved the report. When the King read the paragraph about his spouse, he was heard to mutter "D—d stuff." However, the idea was in general circulation.

Princess Lieven writes from St. Petersburg to Earl Grey : "The Queen's grossesse, if the report be true, will lead to a most important

¹ Clitherow, *Glimpses of King William IV and Queen Adelaide*, p. 56.

² *Greville Memoirs*, ed. 1875, vol. iii. p. 198.

event, and one entirely unexpected. I can well imagine the looks of all the people at the little court at Kensington Palace. There never was anyone there who interested me much, except the little Princess, and I feel sorry for her, for she has already reached an age when such an immense change in her fortunes may produce distressing effects on her character. On the other hand, such a change would doubtless in reality make her lot the happier. But what a come-down it will be for those who are about her! I can readily imagine the joy the King and Queen will experience at the prospect before them, and with this I must fully sympathise.”¹

This joy was not, however, to be granted to Queen Adelaide, for the supposed “grossesse,” which had at first been credited by the doctors, came to nothing. The report was unfortunate, as it revived the scurrilous gossip about the Queen and Lord Howe. He had retired from the post of Queen’s Chamberlain for a long time, but probabilities, or even possibilities, count for little when an exciting piece of gossip can be circulated.

Buckingham Palace was now ready for occupation. “Well, Barry,” writes Creevey in 1835, “as for our Buckingham Palace yesterday—never was there such a specimen of wicked, vulgar profusion. It has cost a million of

¹ *Correspondence of the Princess Lieven and Earl Grey*, vol. iii. p. 88.

money, and there is not a fault that has not been committed in it. You may be sure there are rooms enough, and large enough for the money; but for staircase, passages, etc., I observed that instead of being called Buckingham Palace, it should be the 'Brunswick Hotel.' The costly ornaments of the state-rooms exceed all belief in their bad taste and every species of deformity. Raspberry-coloured pillars without end that quite turn you sick to look at; but the Queen's papers for her own apartments far exceed everything else in their ugliness and vulgarity."¹ However, Queen Victoria was the first to occupy Buckingham Palace, for William IV never moved from St. James's.

Loyalty was not the fashion at that time. "Last night I was at Lady Holland's," says Charles Greville; "there were Lord and Lady Holland, Mulgrave, Seaford, Allen, and Burdett. I asked them if they had read Whittle Harvey's speech at Southwark, which was a tissue of the grossest and most outrageous abuse and ridicule of the King and Queen. They said, 'No,' so I read to them some of the most offensive passages. Not the slightest disgust did they express. Holland merely said to one allegation, 'That is not true,' and Mulgrave laughed and said, 'Whittle is an eccentric politician.'"²

There was even talk among the more violent

¹ *Creevey Papers*, vol. ii. p. 307.

² *Greville Memoirs*, ed. 1875, vol. iii. p. 188.

Radicals of the possibility that the King might abdicate, rather than again accept a Whig Government. The Tory administration was, however, not long-lived. It was ill-fated from the first. Peel, the only man capable of forming it successfully, was absent in Italy at the time of the dismissal of Melbourne, and, pending his return, the Duke of Wellington took charge of three portfolios. The Opposition were, however, determined to oust the Government, and though the King wept to his sister the Duchess of Gloucester, and said that he felt his crown "tottering on his head,"¹ April 1835 saw Melbourne again in power, the Tory Ministry having held the reins for barely six months.

With increasing age, the King's objection to the Whigs became more strongly accentuated. The Queen's dislike for them, especially for Lord Grey, who had, she considered, insulted her by dismissing her Chamberlain without informing her beforehand, was more consistent, and more deeply rooted than the King's. However, she at least attempted to hide her feelings. The King, on the other hand, never concealed his dislike for his Cabinet. He announced that he would rather see the devil than any of them in his house, and the fact that none of the Ministry were invited to the Castle on the King's or Queen's birthday in 1836 naturally caused much comment. However, the surprise occasioned

¹ *Greville Memoirs*, vol. iii. p. 251.

by this failure in etiquette faded into insignificance beside the scandal caused by the King's behaviour to the Duchess of Kent.

As the King grew older, his self-control diminished, while his jealousy of his prerogatives as Monarch increased. Therefore the Duchess of Kent, who was extremely tactless, was continually offending him by actions which he considered wanting in respect. Her Royal progresses, her attempts, in his opinion, to gain popularity at his expense, made him hate her. He was very angry, too, at her friendship with Lord Durham, Lord Grey's son-in-law, one of the strongest upholders of the Reform Bill, whom she often consulted when in difficulties. So far, however, there had been no open rupture between the King and his sister-in-law, but matters soon came to a climax. August was to be a month of festivities at Windsor. On the 13th Queen Adelaide's birthday was to be celebrated, on the 21st the King's; and on the 24th the King's fourth daughter, the widowed Lady Augusta Kennedy-Erskine, was to be married to Lord John Frederick Gordon.

The Duchess of Kent and Princess Victoria were invited to come to Windsor on August 12th, and to stay over the 21st. This the Duchess refused to do, on the pretext that she wished to keep her own birthday at Claremont, and omitting all mention of the Queen's birthday, she announced that she would come to Windsor

on the 20th. The King was very naturally extremely indignant at this cavalier behaviour, and his anger was increased by the discovery, when he next went to London, that his sister-in-law had taken possession of a suite of rooms in Kensington Palace which he had forbidden her to occupy.

His first meeting with her after this discovery took place in the drawing-room at Windsor. All the guests were assembled before dinner, and unable to control himself, he said in a voice which could be heard by everyone, that he would not "endure conduct so disrespectful to himself."

Worse was to follow. The next day the birthday dinner was celebrated. About a hundred people were present, and the King sat between the Duchess of Kent and one of his sisters, with the Princess Victoria opposite him. When, at the Queen's request, his health was drunk, he made a most extraordinary speech, in which he said that he hoped he should live at least nine months, so that the Princess Victoria might reign herself, and the royal authority not be confided to the "person now near me, who is surrounded by evil advisers, and who is herself incompetent to act with propriety in the station in which she would be placed." He went on: "I have no hesitation in saying that I have been insulted—grossly and continually insulted—by that person, but I am

determined to endure no longer a course of behaviour so disrespectful to me. Amongst many other things, I have particularly to complain of the manner in which that young lady has been kept away from my Court; she has been repeatedly kept from my drawing-rooms, at which she ought always to have been present, but I am fully resolved that this shall not happen again. I would have her know that I am King, and I am determined to make my authority respected, and for the future I shall insist and command that the Princess do upon all occasions appear at my Court, as it is her duty to do.”¹

This was said in an excited and angry voice, and was heard with amazement and horror by the assembled company. The Queen showed the deepest distress; the Princess Victoria burst into tears. The Duchess of Kent said nothing, but when the ladies retired, she ordered her carriage, and said she would not remain any longer in the Castle.

A terrible scene ensued before she could be persuaded to stay, and the King was evidently not mollified by his own violent language, as bad-tempered people sometimes are, for when, next day, the Queen was late for dinner, and he was told she was waiting for the Duchess of Kent, he exclaimed in a loud voice before everyone: “That woman is a nuisance!”

These scenes were doubtless most distressing

¹ *Greville Memoirs*, ed. 1875, vol. iii, p. 368.

to the Queen, and the continual complaints and quarrels of the FitzClarence family must have caused her even more trouble. The Earl of Munster had for some time refused to see his father, apparently because he did not consider that sufficient provision had been made for him. In a rather pathetic letter from William IV, written the year he died, in answer to one from Lord Munster apparently containing overtures for peace, he says : " My affection for yourself and all your brothers and sisters is, and ever will be, unaltered ; and the only difference that has arisen between you and me has been that you have not considered that I have a double duty to perform as King and father."

The estrangement had evidently been complete, for the letter goes on : " Whenever you shall feel inclined to return to my roof, the Castle at Windsor, the Pavilion at Brighton, and the Palace at St. James's will be opened to you and yours with perfect satisfaction on my part.

" God bless you, and I ever remain, dearest George,

" Your most truly affectionate father,

" WILLIAM R." ¹

William's heart evidently yearned towards his eldest son, and in his postscript he reiterates his regrets that the Earl of Munster has estranged

¹ *Taylor Papers*, p. 391.



SOPHIA, LADY DE L'ISLE AND DUDLEY.

From a miniature by Morton, in the possession of Lord De L'Isle.

himself from his house, and hopes to see him shortly.

Lord Frederick FitzClarence was also a mal-content, as appears from a severe letter written to him by Sir Herbert Taylor, in answer to one in which he evidently complained that the King had not sufficiently assisted the FitzClarence family. Lord Frederick's letter was apparently so violent that it was impossible to show it to the King, and Sir Herbert's comments on it enable us to realise the terrible embarrassment the FitzClarence family must have been to both King and Queen.

"You appear to complain," says Sir Herbert, "that His Majesty's money (as you call it) is equally divided between sons and daughters; but allowing any claim to primogeniture in this case, could you assert it? could you share otherwise than as a younger child? and is not that division of which you complain one of common occurrence and usage? And surely some credit and gratitude also are due to the King, for having contrived in little more than six years, after paying off a heavy debt, to give to his children, or to pay for them, nearly £30,000 each, besides their current annual allowances."¹

Lord Augustus FitzClarence, for whom Lord Frederick was acting as spokesman, had evidently been peculiarly ungrateful. He now complained bitterly that the King, while doing

¹ *Taylor Papers*, p. 389.

nothing for him, had applied to Melbourne for advancement for a certain Mr. Wood. To this complaint Sir Herbert answered indignantly that Lord Augustus had been offered a prebendal stall at Worcester and a canonry at Windsor, and had refused both posts. "I can certify," says Sir Herbert, "that Lord Augustus has received his full share of 'His Majesty's money,' and that he has never expressed any acknowledgment for this, or any other favour; nay, when he learnt that his sister was to be married under his father's roof he declined to perform the ceremony." Sir Herbert finishes his lecture with the words :

"You proceed to a detail of your personal income, its amount subject to the King's life, and contingent reduction; and you desire me to let you know whether you can or may look forward to anything certain, and to let you know the worst, that you may shape your plans accordingly. I really do not understand you, and I can only ascribe this to my dulness of comprehension."

The year 1837 brought much sorrow to the Royal family. On April 10th the King's eldest daughter, Sophia, Lady de l'Isle and Dudley, died at Kensington Palace. During the winter of 1836, when the Royal Family were at Brighton, she had been the King's constant companion, had driven with him every afternoon, and amused him with her lively talk. After her death the

failure of his health was striking. She was doubtless in part responsible for William's dislike to the Whigs. "The Tories lamented her loss bitterly; for being clever and tactful and strongly attached to their party, she was most useful to them with the King, over whom she exerted much influence."¹

Lady de l'Isle and Dudley was a special favourite with Queen Adelaide, who might have been able to support her husband during his overwhelming grief, had she not been very ill herself. Her cough had for some time caused her much trouble, and though her indisposition was glossed over in the Court Circular, where she is represented as suffering only from the effects of a very bad cold, her illness was in reality extremely dangerous. She was still in a serious condition when, on April 30th, she heard of her much beloved mother's death from influenza.

Queen Adelaide's illness was a long one, and she was only just beginning to recover from it when the King showed signs of failure in health. On May 17th he went from Windsor to St. James's Palace to hold a levée, and on his return the first symptoms of serious malady showed themselves, for his breathing was much oppressed, and he seemed extremely exhausted. The next day he again went to London to hold a drawing-room; and on the

¹ *T. Raikes' Journal*, vol. iii. p. 160.

19th, the anniversary of the Battle of La Hogue, he was able to appear at a dinner he gave to some officers, to whom he discoursed with his usual volubility and detail about various naval wars. However, next day his appetite gave way completely, he fainted at dinner, and the following day he remained in his room. It was necessary to call for special advice, and Sir Henry Hallford and Dr. Chambers were summoned. As the King was not acquainted with Dr. Chambers and might be alarmed at his sudden appearance, he was told the doctor had come to report on the Queen's health, after her long and dangerous illness.

The King was now unable to walk, and was wheeled about the room; he had no special disease, but seemed to have lost all power of rallying. There was, nevertheless, a large party at the Castle for the Eton Regatta and the Ascot Races, and he insisted that the Queen should appear at the races, which she did for an hour.

The Queen was now in constant attendance on her husband; for the last three weeks of his life she hardly left his bedside, and though she was herself ill, she deprived herself of necessary sleep, and for the last ten or twelve days of his life she never undressed. The King's eldest surviving daughter, Lady Mary Fox, also spent much time in her father's sick-room.

Augustus FitzClarence, who was now recon-

ciled to his father, read the Morning Prayer to him every day; and a few days before William's death the Archbishop of Canterbury administered the Sacrament to the King, the Queen, and Lady Mary Fox.

The King's character seemed to have changed completely, and he had become very patient and uncomplaining. "I have had some quiet sleep," he said to Queen Adelaide one morning; "come and pray with me and thank the Almighty for it." "And shall I not pray the Almighty that you may have a good day?" asked the Queen, and the King assented. He expressed a wish to live ten years longer for the sake of the country, and when he realised that this wish was unattainable, hoped that he would at least be alive on the anniversary of Waterloo.

William was most considerate about his wife's feelings, and it was noticed that in her presence he never mentioned the word death. He had interviews with the Duke of Cumberland, soon to become King of Hanover, and also with the Duke of Sussex, and said good-bye to all his children.

The Archbishop of Canterbury read the Visitation of the Sick for the last time beside the dying man. At the Blessing, the Queen, who was kneeling beside him making the responses, and helping him to turn over the pages of his prayer-book, completely broke down. "Bear up, bear up," said the King soothingly; and so

anxious was he to spare her distress that even when the end was near, he pretended to be better.

He died between two and three of the morning of June 20th, 1837, in the presence of his children, and with his wife's hand held in his.

The Landgravine of Hesse-Homburg wrote after his death: "His dear, valuable, perfect widowed queen. She is my great object, she is the first to be thought of. How much she deserves from us all! Never did she leave him night or day! To the last she supported him, and he died in her arms. It is impossible to be too strong in her praise, so well has she conducted herself, soothed him, calmed him, softened the pain and anguish he experienced by her amiability and sweet manner towards him, and for twelve days literally never took off her clothes. You may suppose what a loss it is to her, and yet she bears it with that strong sense of religion for which she has ever been famed, and which has made her go through everything with a degree of calm which one must so much admire." ¹

¹ *Harcourt Papers*, vol. vi. Letter from Princess Elizabeth, July 1st, 1837.

CHAPTER XV

Queen Adelaide's care for William IV's reputation—Letters between her and Queen Victoria—She leaves Windsor—Her failing health—She visits Malta—Queen Victoria's engagement and marriage—Visits and changes of abode—Madeira—Illness and death—Funeral—Will—Opinions of her.

QUEEN ADELAIDE'S principal care after William IV's death was that everything should redound to his credit. She therefore begged the Archbishop of Canterbury, who, with Lord Conyngham, were the bearers of the great news to Queen Victoria, to tell her the details of her uncle's last illness, and to inform her that he had turned his mind to religion, and had died quite happily. She also begged that she might be allowed to remain at Windsor till after the funeral. Lord Conyngham brought back to her messages of condolence and sympathy from Queen Victoria, and later in the day the Queen wrote her aunt a letter addressed with graceful tact to "the Queen," as she would not, she said, be the first to remind her of her changed position. In this she begged Queen Adelaide to consult her own convenience, and to remain at Windsor just as long as she pleased. In reply Queen Adelaide wrote the following letter :

“WINDSOR CASTLE,
“June 20th, 1837.

“MY DEAREST NIECE,

“I feel most grateful for your kind letter full of sympathy with my irreparable loss, and thank you with all my heart for your feeling expressions on this melancholy occasion. I am, as you may suppose, deeply affected by all the sad scenes I have gone through lately; but I have the great comfort to dwell upon the recollection of the perfect resignation, piety, and patience with which the dear King bore his trials and sufferings, and the truly Christian-like manner of his death.

“Excuse my writing more at present; my heart is overwhelmed and my head aches very much. Accept the assurance of my most affectionate devotion, and allow me to consider myself always as your Majesty’s most affectionate Friend, Aunt, and Subject,

“ADELAIDE.”¹

When we realise that this letter was penned but a few hours after William IV’s death its propriety, even gracefulness of expression, and its freedom from excitement and exaggeration are very remarkable.

Two or three days later Queen Adelaide wrote

¹ *Letters of Queen Victoria*, A. C. Benson and Viscount Esher, vol. i. p. 96.



QUEEN ADELAIDE.
From a portrait by W. C. Ross, F.A.

again to the Queen, in answer to a letter from her.

“ MY DEAREST NIECE,

“ I am most grateful for your amiable letter and truly kind offer to come and see me next week. Any day convenient to your Majesty will be agreeable to me, the sooner the better, for I am equally anxious to see you again, and to express to you in person all that I feel for you at this trying moment. If Monday will suit you, I shall be ready to receive you and your dear Mother on that day. My prayers are with you and my blessing follows you in all you have to go through. My health is as well as it can be after all the exertions I have suffered, and I try to keep up under my heavy trial and deep affliction.

“ My best wishes attend you, my dearest Niece, and I am for ever your Majesty’s most affectionate and faithful Friend, Aunt, and Subject,

“ ADELAIDE.” ¹

The formal finish of “ your Majesty’s most affectionate and faithful Friend, Aunt, and Subject,” is, it will be remarked, dropped in the later letters, and Queen Adelaide, evidently at the Queen’s request, is merely her “ most affectionately devoted Aunt Adelaide.”

¹ *Letters of Queen Victoria*, A. C. Benson and Viscount Esher, vol. i. p. 100.

On June 26th the Queen and Duchess of Kent came to Windsor to pay a visit to Queen Adelaide, and were most sympathetic and affectionate. The Queen indeed seems to have felt a sincere affection for her Aunt, and to have shown this in many charming, tactful ways. She writes on June 29th to Lord Melbourne :

“ Lord Albemarle mentioned yesterday to the Queen that all the ladies’ saddle-horses, including the Queen Dowager’s own favourite horses, belonged to the Queen ; but it strikes her that it would be well if the Queen was to give the Queen Dowager the choice of two or three of her own horses, and that she might keep them. The Queen would wish Lord Melbourne to give her his opinion on this subject. . . .”¹

It is pleasant to be able to record that Queen Adelaide, whose life seemed to be spent in showing generosity to people who too often requited her with ingratitude, should in this time of sorrow have met with kindness. She writes to her friend Lady Wellesley : “ God in His mercy supports me under my heavy afflictions which I feel most gratefully.”²

William IV’s funeral took place at Windsor on July 10th. The Dowager Queen was present at it, sitting in the Royal Closet in St. George’s

¹ *Letters of Queen Victoria*, A. C. Benson and Viscount Esher, vol. i. p. 104.

² Brit. Mus., MSS. Room, 37,414, ff. 64-163.

Chapel, which she entered by the private terrace belonging to the Windsor Canons.

The funeral over, the Dowager Queen prepared to leave Windsor. That chapter of her life was closed for ever, and the view she took of it was shown by her reiterated hope in these early days of sorrow, "that she had done her duty." The descent of a step in dignity from Queen Consort to Queen Dowager, which has no doubt caused a pang in the hearts of many a woman in a like position, was certainly not a trial to her. She had shrunk from becoming Queen, and in truth that exaltation had brought her anxiety and unpopularity, had exposed her to calumny, malice, and hatred. The thought of retiring into private life can have had no terrors for her, though leaving Windsor Castle must have been somewhat of a trial, as it always is a trial to close a page in life's history and start on a fresh one. However, it was doubtless pleasant to return to her much-loved Bushey, and there she intended to keep on everyone in her service who had been with her when she was Duchess of Clarence. Before leaving the Castle she wrote to Queen Victoria :

"WINDSOR CASTLE,

"*July 7th, 1837.*

"MY DEAREST NIECE,

"I must, before I leave this dear Castle, once more express to you the grateful sense I

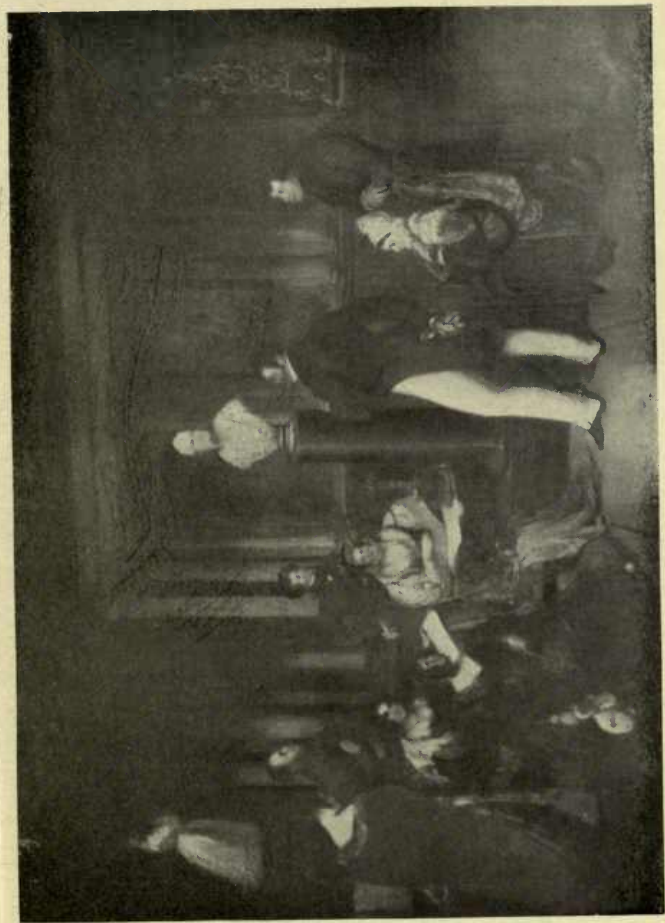
entertain for the kind treatment I have experienced from you since it has pleased our Heavenly Father to put you in possession of it. You have contributed much to my comfort under all the painful and distressing circumstances of this time of woe, and I assure you that I ever shall remember it with sincere gratitude.

“I hope that you continue quite well and do not suffer from the exertions and duties of your new position. My best wishes and prayers attend you on all occasions, for I shall be for the rest of my life devoted and attached to you as your most affectionate Aunt and Subject,

“ADELAIDE.”¹

Before Queen Adelaide left Windsor a message came from the Queen begging that she would take anything she chose from the Castle. She selected two objects—a cup belonging to the King of which he had been very fond and in which she had given him everything during his last illness, and the picture from his own room of all his family. “It was a singular picture,” writes Miss Clitherow, “all the FitzClarences grouped, and in the room Mrs. Jordan hanging a picture on the wall, the King’s bust on a pedestal, and all strikingly like. I think it shows a delicacy of feeling to her King which

¹ *Letters of Queen Victoria*, A. C. Benson and Viscount Esher, vol. i. p. 108.



BUST OF WILLIAM IV, SURROUNDED BY THE FITZCLARENCE FAMILY.

From a picture by John Hayter, formerly at Windsor Castle, now in the possession of Mrs. Kennedy Erskine.

was beautiful. It was a picture better out of sight for his memory.”¹

Several of Queen Adelaide's friends were deeply disappointed because she would receive no visitors. Her health had been much affected by nursing the King, her cough was extremely troublesome, and she required complete rest. Her refusal to see Sir Herbert Taylor before she left the Castle was doubtless owing to her desire to avoid any agitating interviews, though it was referred by some to the fact that Lord Howe and Sir Herbert Taylor had never been on good terms.

Queen Adelaide wrote the Queen the following characteristic letter on the day of the Coronation :

“MARLBORO' HOUSE,

“June 28th, 1838,

“at a quarter before 12 o'clock on the Coronation Day.

“MY DEAR NIECE,

“The guns are just announcing your approach to the Abbey, and as I am not near you, and cannot take part in the sacred ceremony of your Coronation, I must address you in writing to assure you that my thoughts and my whole heart are with you, and my prayers are offered up to Heaven for your happiness and the prosperity and glory of your reign. May our Heavenly Father bless and preserve you, and His Holy Ghost dwell within you to give you that peace which the world cannot give. Accept of these

¹ Clitherow, *Glimpses of King William IV and Queen Adelaide*, ed. White.

my best wishes and the blessing of your most devoted and attached Aunt,

“ADELAIDE.”¹

Marlborough House and Bushey were now Queen Adelaide's residences, and her life was a quiet one. There is not much to record about it, though she spent her time doing good. Out of her income of £100,000, £50,000 was spent in helping others. She was a most liberal subscriber to the charities in the parish of St. Martin's, in which Marlborough House was situated, to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, to the Colonial Bishopric Fund, and to many other charities.

The year after King William's death she made her first voyage in search of health. After cruising about the Mediterranean and spending some time at Gibraltar, she went to Malta, where she arrived in a two-decker sailing-vessel named *Hastings*. There was great excitement in the island when it was known that she was approaching Syracuse, and when the sail of the *Hastings* was seen in the distance, and the *Rhadamanthus* was ordered to tow her into port, spectators crowded the shore, and a great part of the squadron were present under the command of Admiral Sir Robert Stopford.² The Governor, Sir H. Bouverie, went with his staff to the mouth

¹ *Letters of Queen Victoria*, A. C. Benson and Viscount Esher, vol. i. p. 153.

² *Malta Gov. Gazette*, December 5th, 1838.

of the harbour, and was presented by Lord Howe to Queen Adelaide, who said she would land the next day at two o'clock.

The next day everything was prepared to give the Queen a most hearty reception. A triumphal arch had been erected across the Strada Reale by Maltese subscriptions, and many regiments lined the streets. At two o'clock the Royal salute was fired from the *Hastings*, and a barge steered by the commander of the vessel, containing Queen Adelaide and her ladies, put off from it.

The assembled people were much charmed by the gracious smile with which they were greeted by the Queen.

It was then a time of prosperity and of development for Malta. The popular Governor, Sir H. Bouverie, was most active in constructing roads, and undertook the work of draining the upper part of the Great Harbour. One want, however, had not been supplied, for no church existed for the use of people belonging to the Church of England, and in consequence, Dissent was gaining ground very largely. This was a need which appealed strongly to Queen Adelaide's feelings. She therefore wrote to the Queen, begging her to consult with the Archbishop of Canterbury and with her Ministers "to devise the best means of remedying a want so discreditable to our country."¹ She offered at the same time to

¹ *Letters of Queen Victoria*, A. C. Benson and Viscount Esher, vol. i. p. 175.

contribute to any subscription which might be started with this object in view ; and eventually she erected the church herself.

We read the following paragraph in Seddall's *Malta, Past and Present* :

“ The visit of the Queen lasted three months, during which time she endeared herself to the native population by her unaffected kindness and by her royal bearing. She has left behind her an enduring monument in the Collegiate Church of St. Paul at Valetta, of which she laid the foundation stone on the 20th of March, 1839. The Church was erected at her sole expense, and cost £18,000. It was consecrated and opened for divine service on the 1st of November, 1842, by the Right Rev. Dr. Tomlinson, the first Bishop of Gibraltar.”

Queen Adelaide seems to have enjoyed her stay in Malta extremely. It was her first experience of life in a hot climate, and Queen Victoria, who was undergoing the discomforts of an English winter, found that her accounts of the orange trees and tropical plants in the gardens of the Palace of St. Antonio at Valetta “ do tantalise one a good deal, I must own.” ¹

Queen Adelaide's stay at Malta was evidently beneficial to her, and we hear of her visiting

¹ *Letters of Queen Victoria*, A. C. Benson and Viscount Esher, vol. i. p. 180.



VII
VIEW OF QUEEN ADELAIDE'S HOUSE AT FUNCHAL.



ANOTHER VIEW OF QUEEN ADELAIDE'S HOUSE AT FUNCHAL.

the Queen at her box in the opera after her return. Rather later she paid her first visit to Windsor since William IV's death. The Queen felt considerable anxiety beforehand about this visit, as she considered that it would be a great trial to the Dowager Queen, and she was much relieved to find her "very cheerful and in good spirits."¹

The Queen wrote to her aunt to announce her engagement to Prince Albert in a letter beginning, "Your constant kindness and the affection you have shown me make me certain that you will take much interest in an event which so nearly concerns the future happiness of my life; I cannot therefore, any longer delay to inform you of my intended marriage with my cousin, Albert."²

The Queen Dowager was of course present at the Queen's wedding, and with the King of the Belgians, the Duke of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, the Duchess of Gloucester, the Duchess of Kent, and the Duke of Sussex, she was one of the sponsors at the christening of the Princess Royal, who was born on November 21st, 1840.

The Queen Dowager's relations with the Royal Family generally were most affectionate. When her old friend Princess Augusta died on Septem-

¹ *Letters of Queen Victoria*, A. C. Benson and Viscount Esher, vol. i. p. 236.

² *Ibid.* vol. i. p. 245.

ber 26th, 1840, Queen Adelaide held her hand in hers till the end.

Time did not alter Queen Adelaide's strong Tory predilections, and she annoyed the Queen in 1841 by writing to compliment her "on the good grace with which she had changed her Government," which meant, of course, that Lord Melbourne had ceased to be the Queen's principal adviser.

"Though the change," writes Queen Adelaide, "must have been very trying to you, I trust that you will have perfect confidence in the able men who form your Council. Our beloved late King's anxious wish to see Wellington and Peel again at the head of the Administration is now fulfilled. His blessing rests upon you."¹

The friendship between Queen Adelaide and the Duchess of Kent was now as warm as ever, and her affection for Queen Victoria and her children was great. There were sometimes, indeed, causes for annoyance, as on the occasion when Queen Adelaide thought that the Queen had advised her to refuse the post of godmother to the son of Prince Hohenlohe-Waldenburg, because the child would be brought up as a Roman Catholic, and then felt injured because the Queen herself accepted the office. There was evidently some misunderstanding, as the Queen for her part declared that she had no

¹ *Letters of Queen Victoria*, A. C. Benson and Viscount Esher, vol. i. p. 404.

recollection of having ever spoken to her aunt about the matter.

There are not many more events to record in the Dowager Queen's life. She and the Duchess of Kent were again friends, her sister the Duchess Ida of Saxe-Weimar spent much time with her, and Prince Edward of Saxe-Weimar, her favourite nephew, lived almost entirely with her. Lord Howe—who had married again—was still her faithful friend and Chamberlain, and she took much interest in the education of his children. She was on intimate terms with most of William IV's children, and the FitzClarence grandchildren often visited her at Marlborough House, where Lady Munster specially remembers her wonderful red and grey parrot.

Queen Adelaide occasionally paid visits. She stayed in Sir Robert Peel's house, and also at Belvoir, in both places to meet the Queen. In 1840 she and the Duchess of Saxe-Weimar were guests of the Harcourts at Nuneham, the Duke of Wellington being also there. It is recorded on this visit that while Wellington and the Archbishop of York were walking on the terrace, the Archbishop fell, and when picked up by Wellington, who asked whether he was hurt, said: "If I am, it is on a side on which your Grace never gave the enemy a chance of hurting you." ¹

¹ *Harcourt Papers*, vol. xii. p. 247.

In 1844 Queen Adelaide paid a visit to her native country. She arrived at Altenstein on July 5th, and was greeted by the firing of cannons and the ringing of bells. When she reached Meiningen she found the town decorated, her way was strewn with flowers, and the magistrates and dignitaries of the town appeared to show her honour. It was a lovely day, and the garlands which festooned the streets and the triumphal arches showed to the best advantage. The next day Queen Adelaide visited the Castle chapel, where a monument had been erected to commemorate her mother's memory, and later she again went to the chapel accompanied by her sister and by other members of the Royal Family. In the evening a dinner party was given in the Castle, and the next day all the company attended a solemn service in the chapel.

This visit must have awakened many sad recollections in Queen Adelaide's mind, especially of the mother to whom she had been most fondly attached.

We hear of her as often changing her abode in the vain search for health. Witley Court in Worcestershire, which then belonged to Lord Dudley, was her home for a few months in 1843; and for a short time she rented Cassiobury, Lord Essex's house in Middlesex. Her delicate health had made her rather fidgety about due attention being shown her. On one occasion Queen Vic-

toria asked King Leopold to write to the Queen Dowager, who was hurt because when she was staying at Windsor Castle he had omitted to take leave of her, and, with what seems considerable discourtesy, never answered when she wrote to him.

During a visit Queen Adelaide paid in 1846 to the Queen at Windsor, the Princess of Prussia, afterwards Empress of Germany and mother to the Emperor Frederick, was also staying there. She had been a Princess of Saxe-Weimar, and Queen Adelaide had known her from babyhood. Queen Victoria writes to her uncle to say that she is "charmed with the Princess, and cannot believe the stories told about her falseness, especially as the Queen Dowager, who knows her well, is firm in her friendship for her."¹

In 1847 Queen Adelaide was advised as a last resource to try the climate of Madeira for her health. She was now a complete invalid, and she led an absolutely retired life at the villa Quinta des Augustrias in Funchal. Her charities did not, however, cease. On January 4th, 1848, she presented the Civil Governor of Madeira with £100 to be used for the help of the poor, and on February 12th, 1849, she offered a liberal donation to the Governor, through the British Consul, Mr. Veitch, for opening and making a road from Ribeiro Sacco to Camaro de Lobos,

¹ *Letters of Queen Victoria*, A. C. Benson and Viscount Esher, vol. ii. p. 126.

a fishing-village about five miles from Funchal to the west.

The exact date of her departure from Madeira is not known. Her stay there had not done her any material benefit, and in the autumn of 1849 it was evident that she was dying. She now never left her room, and constant bulletins were issued from Bentley Priory, Stanmore, where she was staying. Her cough was extremely harassing, her nights were restless, and her strength was failing rapidly.

The friends she most loved surrounded her during this last illness—her beloved sister the Duchess Ida, Prince Edward of Saxe-Weimar (one of the many children the childless woman had mothered) were with her; and the week before her death the Queen and Prince Albert paid their last visit to her.

“I shall never forget,” says the Queen in a letter to King Leopold, “the visit we paid to the Priory [Stanmore] last Thursday. There was death written in that dear face. It was such a picture of misery, of complete *anéantissement*—and yet she talked of everything. I could hardly command my feelings when I came in, and when I kissed twice that poor, dear, thin hand—I love her so dearly. She has ever been so maternal in her affection to me. She will find peace and a reward for her many sufferings.”¹

¹ *Letters of Queen Victoria*, A. C. Benson and Viscount Esher, vol. ii. p. 273.

One of her last visitors was her old friend the Duchess of Kent, who came over two days before her death, when she was almost too weak to speak. The barrier which had divided them, and had certainly not been erected by Queen Adelaide, was now broken down.

“Much was done to set Mamma against her,” wrote Queen Victoria, “but the dear Queen ever forgave this, ever showed love and affection, and for the last eight years their friendship was as great as ever.”¹

At two o'clock on the morning of December 2nd, 1849, Queen Adelaide breathed her last. Her end was very peaceful, and it was only an hour before her death that those around her realised that the time for her departure was at hand. She knew them all and spoke to them till nearly the last.

The Queen wrote: “I know how truly you will grieve with us for the loss of our dearly beloved Queen Adelaide, though for her we must not repine. Though we daily expected this sad event, yet it came as suddenly when it did come, as if she had never been ill, and I can hardly realise the truth now. You know how *very* kind she was at all times to me, and how admirably she behaved from the time the King died. She was truly motherly in her kindness to us and to our children, and it always made

¹ *Letters of Queen Victoria*, A. C. Benson and Viscount Esher, vol. ii. p. 273.

her happy to be with us, and to see us. She is a great loss to us both, and an irreparable one to hundreds and hundreds. She is universally regretted, and the feeling shown is very gratifying.”¹

In another letter the Queen says: “The universal feeling of sorrow and regret and of real appreciation of her character is very touching and gratifying. *All parties, all classes, join in doing her justice.*”²

The funeral took place at Windsor on Tuesday, December 11th. Queen Adelaide’s directions for it were as follows: “I die in all humility, knowing well that we are all alike before the Throne of God, and request, therefore, that my mortal remains be conveyed to the grave without any pomp or state. They are to be moved to St. George’s Chapel, Windsor, where I request to have as private and quiet a funeral as possible. I particularly desire not to be laid out in state, and the funeral to take place by daylight, no procession, the coffin to be carried by sailors to the Chapel.

“All those of my relations and friends, to a limited number, who wish to attend, may do so. My nephew, Prince Edward of Saxe-Weimar, Lords Howe and Denbigh, the Hon. William Ashley, Mr. Wood, Sir Andrew Barnard, and

¹ *Life of the Prince Consort*, Martin, vol. ii. p. 233.

² *Letters of Queen Victoria*, A. C. Benson and Viscount Esher, vol. ii. p. 273.



VIEW OF FUNCHAL.



ANOTHER VIEW OF FUNCHAL.

Sir D. Davis, with my dressers and those of my ladies who may wish to attend.

“ I die in peace and wish to be carried to the tomb in peace and free from the vanities and pomps of this world.

“ I request not to be dissected nor embalmed, and desire to give as little trouble as possible.

(Signed) “ ADELAIDE.

“ *November, 1849.*”

There was no lying in state ; for Stanmore was not a Royal residence, and everything was arranged as simply as possible.

It was a dull, foggy morning when the procession passed out through the gates of Stanmore, and the black-and-white nodding plumes and mourning veils loomed, huge monstrosities, through the fog. Thick vapour hung over the wet hedges, and the only cheerful note in the ceremony was given by the red coats and burnished helmets of the detachment of soldiers which accompanied it. The route went through Ruislip, Uxbridge, and Slough. At the towns and villages in the neighbourhood of Stanmore, cottagers to whom Queen Adelaide had shown kindness came out from their homes to watch the sad procession. At Harrow the bells were tolling, and a number of boys in weepers and black scarves walked with the mourning coaches for a short way. At Ruislip all the shops were closed. Everywhere the respect and affection felt

for Good Queen Adelaide were plainly shown. The Queen was at Osborne, but Prince Albert joined the procession at Slough and accompanied it to Windsor, where all that was mortal of the late Queen was deposited in the Chapel vault. Lord Byron and Lords Frederick and Adolphus FitzClarence were pall bearers. Lords Howe and Denbigh broke their staves of office over the coffin, and the first part of the ceremony was over.

Two days later, on December 13th, 1849, in the presence of Prince Albert, the Duke of Cambridge, Prince George of Cambridge, the Duchess of Kent, the Duchess of Cambridge, and the Duchess of Saxe-Weimar, Queen Adelaide's body was borne, as she had wished, by sailors to the grave.

The will in which she divided her possessions among her family and friends is a very voluminous document. Over one hundred people are mentioned in it, and much thought had been expended on the bestowal on each recipient of what was likely to be specially welcome. It is impossible to mention more than a few of these bequests. To the Queen was left that most precious possession, the marble effigy of the little Princess Elizabeth, and the rings given to Queen Adelaide and King William IV at their Coronation. These Queen Adelaide begged should be deposited in a little box with a superscription describing them, and be added to the

Crown jewels. To her brother was bequeathed King William's bust, also the bust of the Princess Louise of Saxe-Weimar, both by Chantrey. To her eldest nephew, the heir to the Dukedom of Saxe-Meiningen, she left the Bible which her mother had given her in 1805, evidently at the time of her Confirmation, which she had used ever since, and which was her "greatest treasure and consolation."

To her sister, among many other bequests not of great value, but evidently sure to be very precious to the recipient, she gave the last piece of needlework done by the Princess Louise, a box containing memorials of William IV, and of the infant Princess Elizabeth, her sketches, and a Testament bound in red velvet.

To the Duchess of Gloucester was left William IV's last present to his wife, a diamond bracelet which he gave her the day before his death, also the gold chain and keys he always wore, and a portrait of him which had been bequeathed to Queen Adelaide by Princess Augusta.

The FitzClarences were not forgotten. Among other bequests of jewellery and of valuable artistic objects, the five rings Queen Adelaide had received from the Duke of Clarence at her betrothal were given to William IV's daughters, Lady Frederick FitzClarence counting as one of them in place of Lady Sophia de l'Isle and Dudley. William IV's sons received all the

pictures in the Bushey Gallery, and special mementoes of their father, such as the silver cup he always used, and his prayer-book.

To Lord Howe and Lady Howe the Queen's bequests were many, those to Lord Howe including a Bible, and the writing apparatus she generally used. In fear of reviving the gossip formerly in circulation about the Queen's relations with Lord Howe, it was thought wise by those in authority to ignore these bequests. To her physician, Sir D. Davies, the Queen left £3,000, and to various servants £1,000, or in some cases £500. No one was forgotten, and the care taken that each recipient should be given what would be of special interest to him or to her, is a striking evidence of Queen Adelaide's characteristic thoughtfulness for others.

Fate had been in her case a hard taskmistress, but her own thorny path had been of use in endowing her with a sympathetic knowledge of the minds of those with whom she was brought into contact. Though she was not destined to taste many of life's joys, she had indeed drunk deeply of its sorrows. Devoted to children, and a mother only for a short four months, delicate in health and often suffering from illness, a prey to petty vexations incidental to the hostility with which she was regarded by some at least of William IV's children, in constant anxiety about the condition of a husband often on the verge

of insanity, Queen Adelaide yet managed to preserve her cheerfulness and placidity.

The detraction, abuse, and even intimidation to which she was subjected in her public capacity as Queen Consort did indeed cause her bitter distress; but her indignation at the injustice with which she was treated, and her want of understanding of the English people as a nation, did not prevent her from returning good for evil, and she became the benefactress of many of those who had maligned her. "Good Queen Adelaide" is certainly a well-earned epithet, and it is pleasant to know that in the end she reconquered the affections of the English people, which she had lost for a while as Queen Consort, and that her death was genuinely mourned by all classes.

Queen Victoria's sister, Princess Hohenlohe, wrote with much feeling and an evident knowledge of the trying circumstances of Queen Adelaide's life: "She has left behind her love, respect, and gratitude, and she was ever ready to go to her place of eternal rest, where she will find that happiness which she never knew here. Let us think of her bliss after this life of suffering, which she spent in doing good to thousands who will bless her memory. Let her life be an example to us!"¹

¹ *Life of the Prince Consort*, Martin, vol. ii. p. 234

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